

T H E FANTASTIC FOUR®



MARVEL MASTERWORKS®
BY STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY

MARVEL

M A R V E L M A S T E R W O R K S
P R E S E N T S

THE Fantastic FOUR

VOLUME 6
COLLECTING
THE FANTASTIC FOUR Nos. 51-60
& ANNUAL No. 4
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THE FANTASTIC FOUR

Nos. 51-60 & ANNUAL No. 4

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The Fantastic Four #58, January 1967

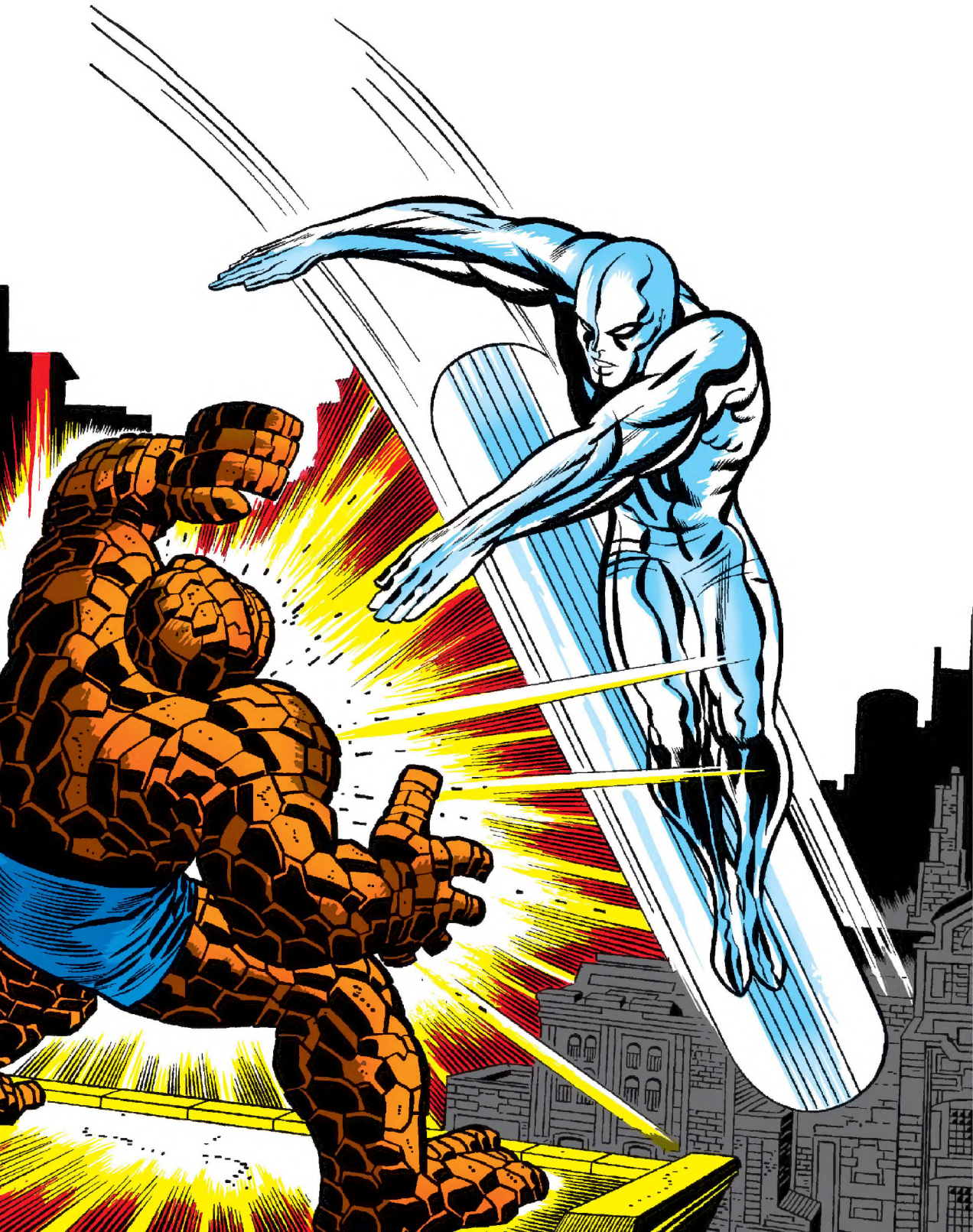
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“Doomsday!”

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“The Peril and the Power!”



INTRODUCTION

BY STAN LEE

First of all, I have a confession to make. I'm not the one who should be writing this intro!

It should be written by somebody who's impartial, who can look at the incredible episodes in this book with objectivity. Personally, I can't. I love every illustration, every panel, every caption and word balloon much too much. I'm too big a fan of Jack "King" Kirby's indescribable artwork and storytelling magic, too great an admirer of Joe Sinnott's inking, and, to tell the truth, I'm just too big a fan of the comic book itself which years ago, I dared to dub "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine." I meant it then and I mean it now.

If you've never read these stories before, I can unhesitatingly say you're in for the treat of a lifetime. As for me, I did read them before. Matter of fact, I wrote them, in collaboration with the most imaginative illustrator and co-plotter I've ever known. However, having the world's worst memory, I decided to reread each yarn to reacquaint myself with them before writing this introduction. And y'know something? I enjoyed them as much as if I'd never read them before!

Let's start with "This Man...This Monster!" I've always been particularly proud of this one, in which a deadly super-villain makes the supreme sacrifice in order to—aw, this isn't fair. I've no right to give the plot twists away; but I'll bet you too will find it hard to finish the last page without a lump in your throat. I'm particularly partial to it because it involves heavy characterization and emotion as much as action and suspense. As for the title itself, it's been paraphrased and imitated in more stories than any other that I know of.

Another favorite of mine is "The Way It Began..!" featuring the mysterious and charismatic Black Panther, the first African super hero in comics. I've always strongly believed he has all the qualities necessary to become one of the most popular, best-selling heroes in all of comicdom. When you combine his unique and glamorous panther power with the strange gripping legend of the Wakanda nation and add the fact that T'Challa is guardian of the world's only priceless store of vibranium, you've got a combo that's hard to beat. After reading this yarn, I suspect you'll agree.

But how can I talk about my favorites when, as I read each separate story, I realize that they're all my favorites! It's been so long since I've written about them that I had almost forgotten the Inhumans. But as I turned each page of the story you'll soon be reading, I couldn't help but relive again the wonder and excitement of the regal Black Bolt and his strange and colorful family. From the gigantic dog Lockjaw to Gorgon, Medusa, Karnak and Crystal, I defy you to find a more unique group of heroes anywhere in comicdom.

Incidentally, I hope you'll be aware of the way we tried to intertwine and link the various heroes and villains through all our tales. You'll notice how Dr. Doom interfaces with both the Fantastic Four and the Silver Surfer, and how we even managed to add the seemingly invulnerable Sandman into the mix.

Speaking of Dr. Doom, who has always been my favorite super-villain, I particularly enjoyed pitting him against the Silver Surfer who is definitely one of my all-time favorite heroes. The thing that grabs me about the silver spanner of the spaceways is his unshakable nobility. I always tried to have him say the things that I myself feel deeply about and would like to say about the human

condition and the state of the world. To me, he has ever been the visual depiction of our own conscience, an eloquent sounding board for Marvel—and me.

But the character that totally grabbed me each and every time I wrote these yarns was inevitably the ever-lovin' blue-eyed Thing. There is something about his rough, tough, always-looking-for-a-fight attitude that conceals his true soft-hearted, generous and loyal nature, which I find totally irresistible. In fact, I'm sure that almost any Marvel reader, if asked which of our characters he would prefer for his best friend, would be tempted to say none other than Aunt Petunia's favorite nephew, Benjamin J. Grimm.

But how could I fail to mention the other members of the Fantastic Four? You may not know it, but I got a big kick out of modeling Reed Richards after myself in one special way. No, my body doesn't stretch and I'm not the world's greatest scientist. But I do sometimes tend to talk too much and to use a few big words when some little ones would do the trick just as well. Oh, how I used to enjoy writing the Thing's dialogue when he tried to deflate Mr. Fantastic's pomposity by telling him to stifle it and start speaking plain English.

I also invariably got a kick out of the Human Torch. You see, I never liked the idea of heroes hangin' around with teenaged sidekicks. It always seemed too corny to me for some kid to follow the hero around and try to help him during a fight. But, I figured if I had to have a teenager, I'd make him old enough to do his own thing, his own way, instead of being a carbon copy of the hero. Besides, I love writing expressions like "Flame On!" (And leave us not forget my arguable masterpiece, "It's Clobberin' Time!")

Well, I could go on and on—and you're probably groaning, "I hope he doesn't mean it!"—but we have to stop somewhere, and this is as good a place as any. Jack Kirby and I had done our very best for you; we tried to give you imaginative, cutting-edge stories with action, fantasy and suspense, and above all, stories that stress drama and characterization and which would never insult your intelligence.

How well we succeeded is for you to decide. But let me say, in a brash display of overconfidence, I've a hunch that once you start reading the pages ahead, you won't be able to put the book down! I know that I couldn't and hey, I even wrote the stuff!

EXCELSIOR!



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COMICS
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MARVEL
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Fantastic FOUR

"THIS
MAN...
THIS
MONSTER!"



THE FABULOUS **F.F.** MUST SOLVE THE TERRIBLE RIDDLE OF...

"THIS MAN... THIS MONSTER!"

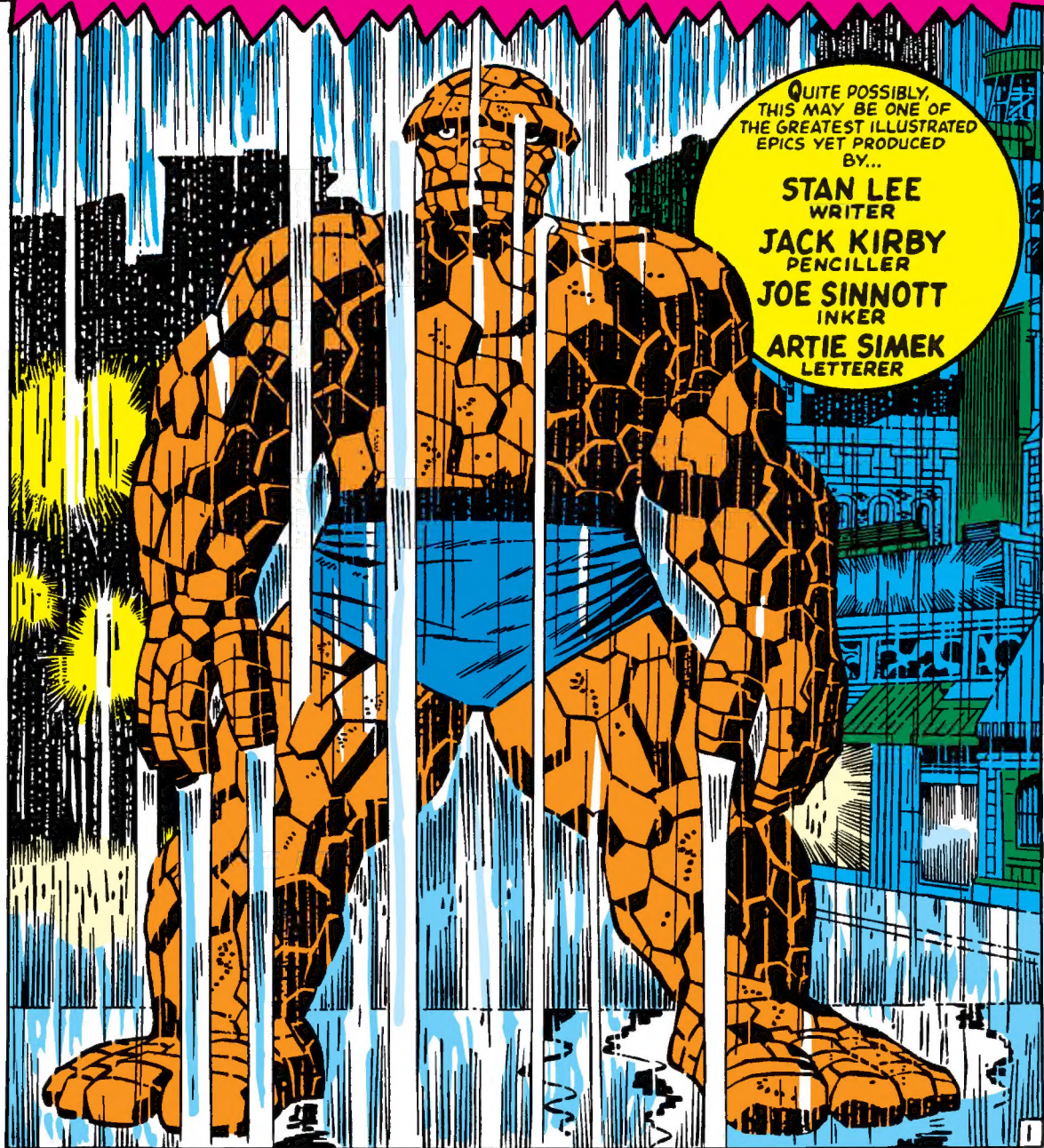
QUITE POSSIBLY,
THIS MAY BE ONE OF
THE GREATEST ILLUSTRATED
EPICS YET PRODUCED
BY...

STAN LEE
WRITER

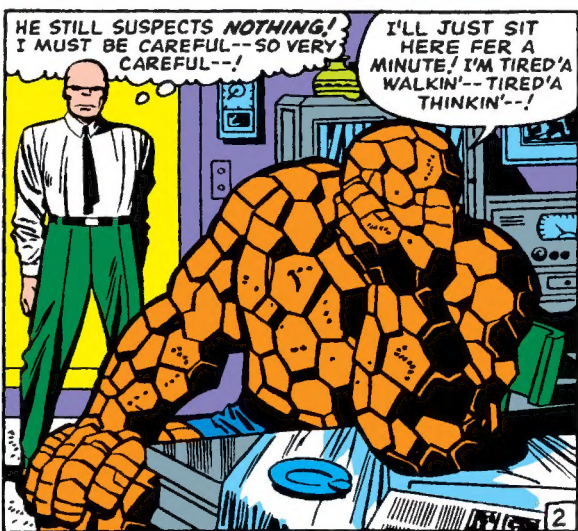
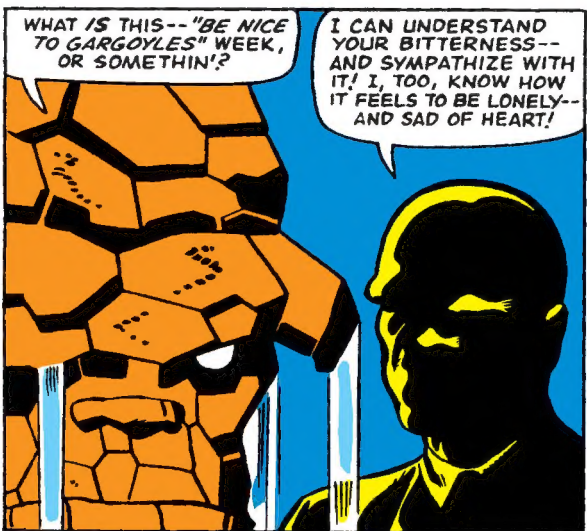
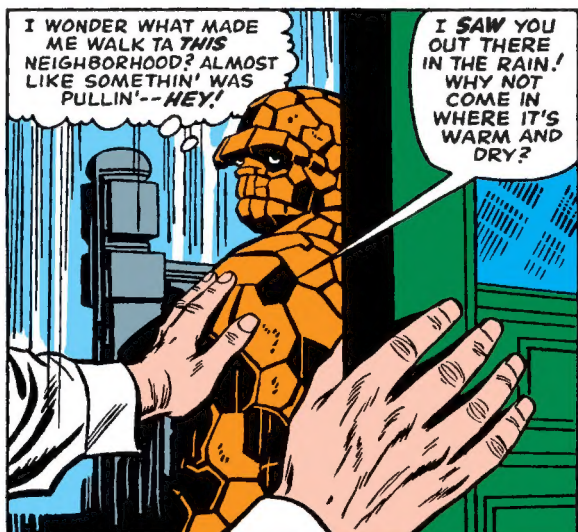
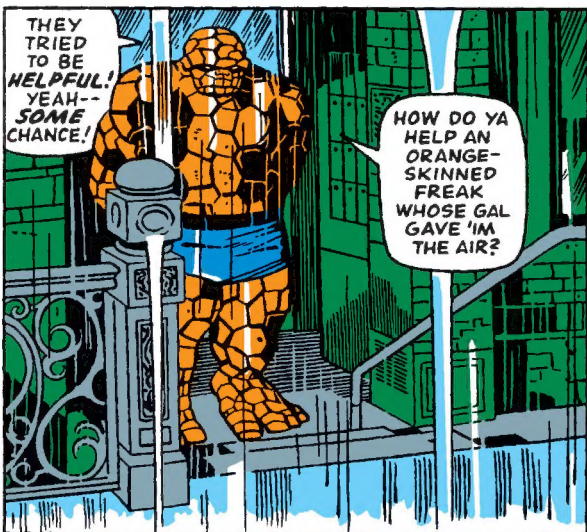
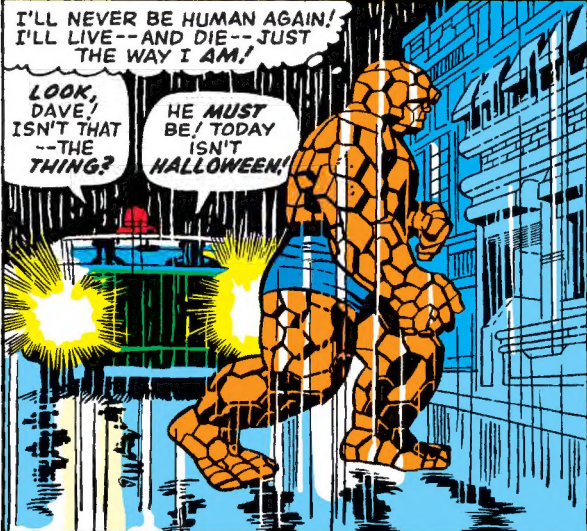
JACK KIRBY
PENCILLER

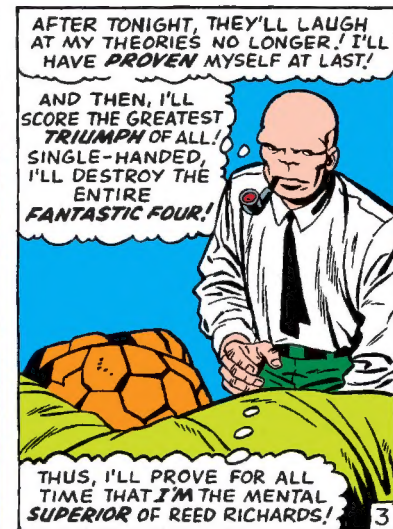
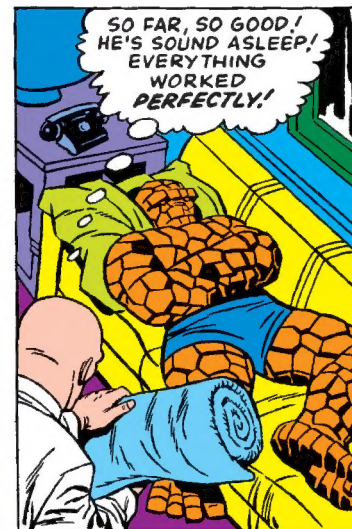
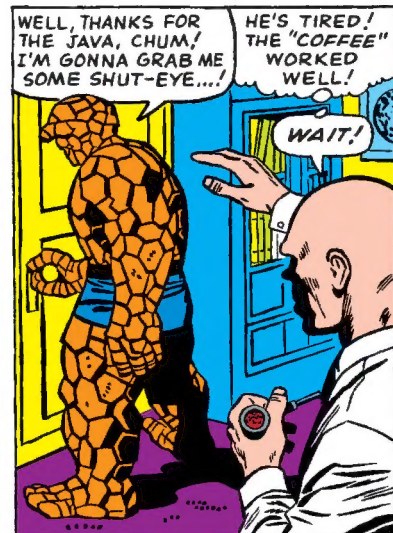
JOE SINNOTT
INKER

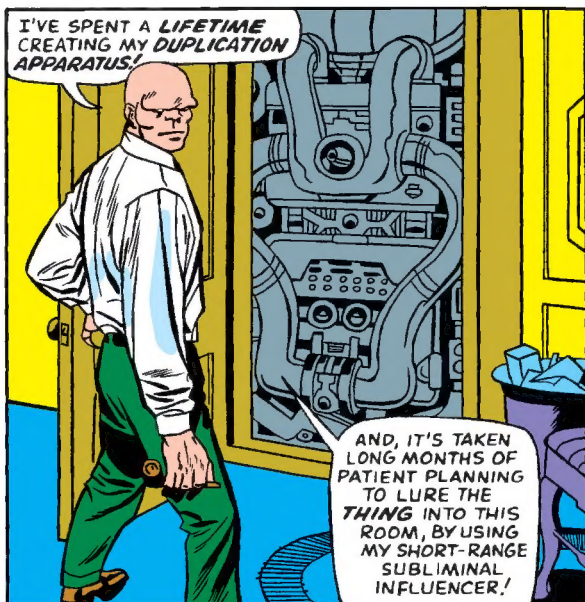
ARTIE SIMEK
LETTERER



OCCASIONALLY, A TALE NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION! THIS IS SUCH A TALE, A RAINY NIGHT--A STRANGELY FORLORN FIGURE--AND RARE WONDERMENT AWAITS US--!







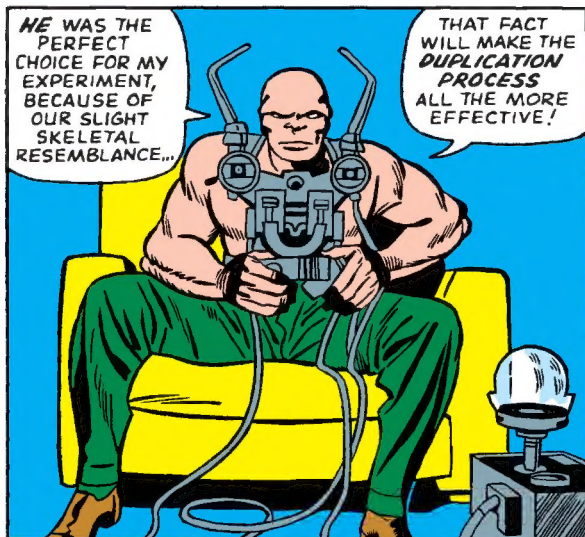
I'VE SPENT A **LIFETIME** CREATING MY **DUPLICATION APPARATUS!**

AND, IT'S TAKEN LONG MONTHS OF PATIENT PLANNING TO LURE THE **THING** INTO THIS ROOM, BY USING MY SHORT-RANGE SUBLIMINAL INFLUENCER!



BUT NOW, ALL THE LABOR, ALL THE WAITING, ALL THE SCHEMING WILL PAY OFF AT LAST! I'M **THRU** BEING A LOSER-- **THIS** TIME I'VE GOT THE **WINNING HAND!**

AS FOR THE **THING**--- THERE'S **NO WAY** HE CAN **EVER STOP ME!**

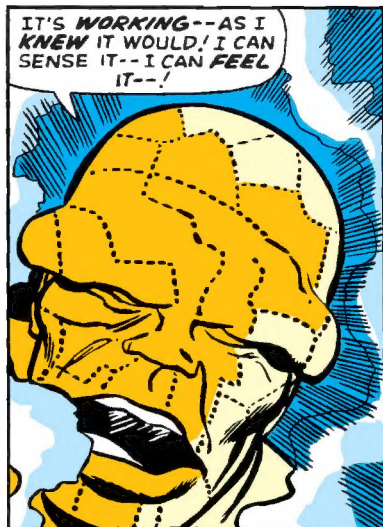


HE WAS THE PERFECT CHOICE FOR MY EXPERIMENT, BECAUSE OF OUR SLIGHT SKELETAL RESEMBLANCE...

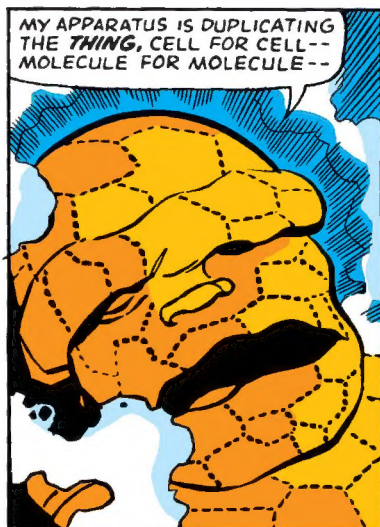
THAT FACT WILL MAKE THE **DUPLICATION PROCESS** ALL THE MORE EFFECTIVE!



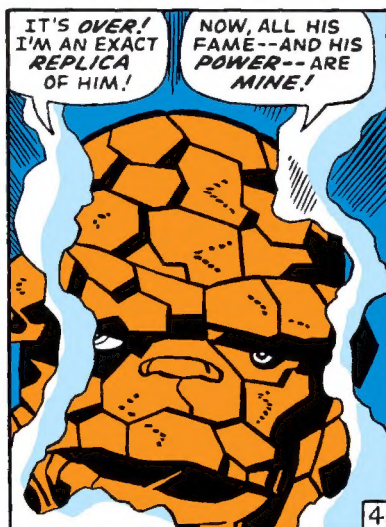
AND NOW--LET IT **BEGIN!**



IT'S **WORKING**--AS I **KNEW** IT WOULD! I CAN SENSE IT-- I CAN **FEEL** IT--!

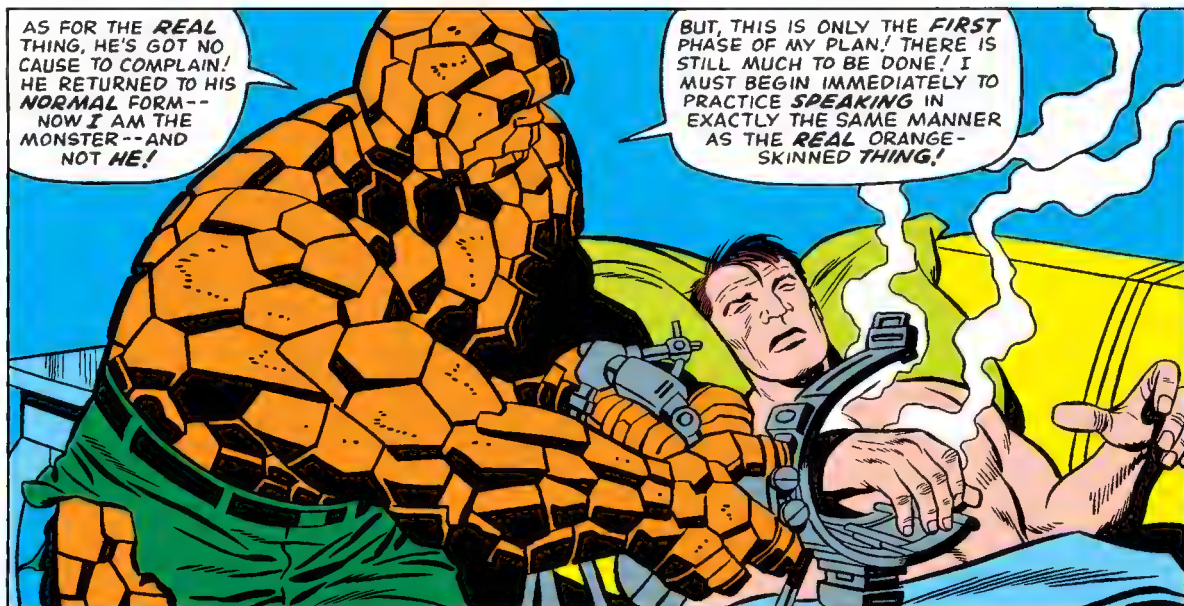


MY APPARATUS IS DUPLICATING THE **THING**, CELL FOR CELL-- MOLECULE FOR MOLECULE--



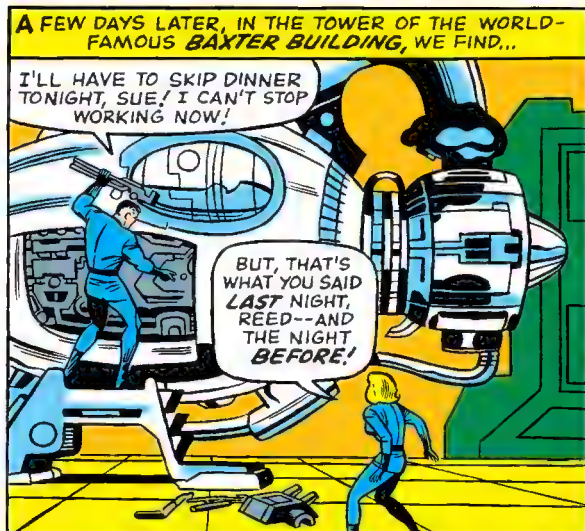
IT'S **OVER!** I'M AN EXACT **REPLICA** OF HIM!

NOW, ALL HIS **FAME**--AND HIS **POWER**--ARE **MINE!**



AS FOR THE **REAL** THING, HE'S GOT NO CAUSE TO COMPLAIN! HE RETURNED TO HIS **NORMAL FORM**-- NOW I AM THE MONSTER--AND NOT HE!

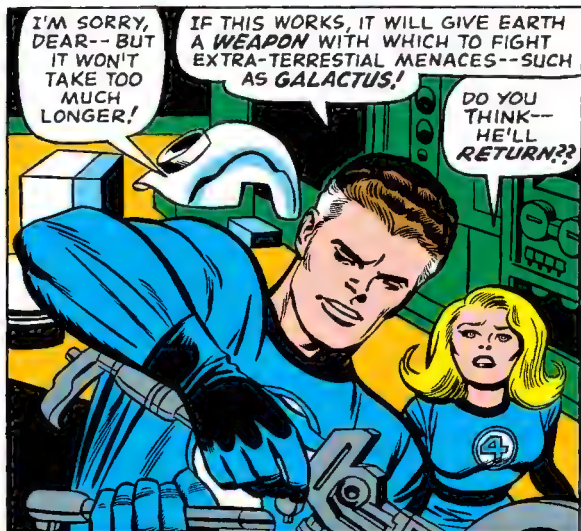
BUT, THIS IS ONLY THE **FIRST** PHASE OF MY PLAN! THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE! I MUST BEGIN IMMEDIATELY TO PRACTICE **SPEAKING** IN EXACTLY THE SAME MANNER AS THE **REAL ORANGE-SKINNED THING!**



A FEW DAYS LATER, IN THE TOWER OF THE WORLD-FAMOUS **BAXTER BUILDING**, WE FIND...

I'LL HAVE TO SKIP DINNER TONIGHT, SUE! I CAN'T STOP WORKING NOW!

BUT, THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID **LAST NIGHT**, REED--AND THE NIGHT **BEFORE!**



I'M SORRY, DEAR-- BUT IT WON'T TAKE TOO MUCH LONGER!

IF THIS WORKS, IT WILL GIVE EARTH A **WEAPON** WITH WHICH TO FIGHT **EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL MENACES**--SUCH AS **GALACTUS!**

DO YOU THINK-- HE'LL **RETURN??**

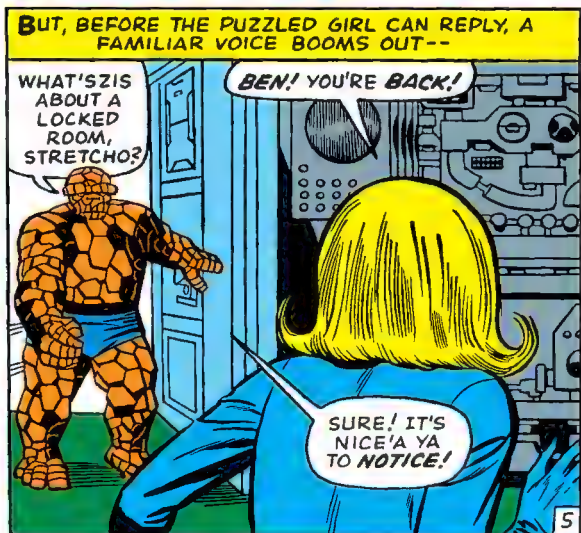


THERE'S **ALWAYS** A CHANCE! AND, IN THIS NEW **SPACE AGE**, WE MUST HAVE **ADEQUATE DEFENSES** AGAINST ANY ATTACK!

I-I THINK YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU'RE **TELLING ME!**

YOU'VE HAD WORK CREWS ALL WEEK BUILDING NEW MACHINES --ESPECIALLY THAT ONE IN THE LOCKED, LEAD-LINED ROOM!

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT--?

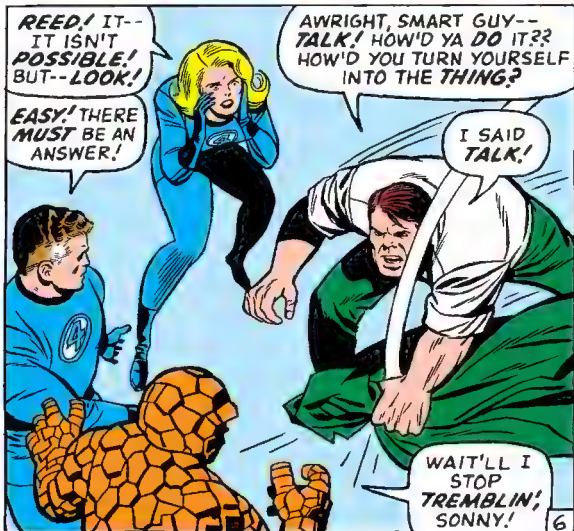
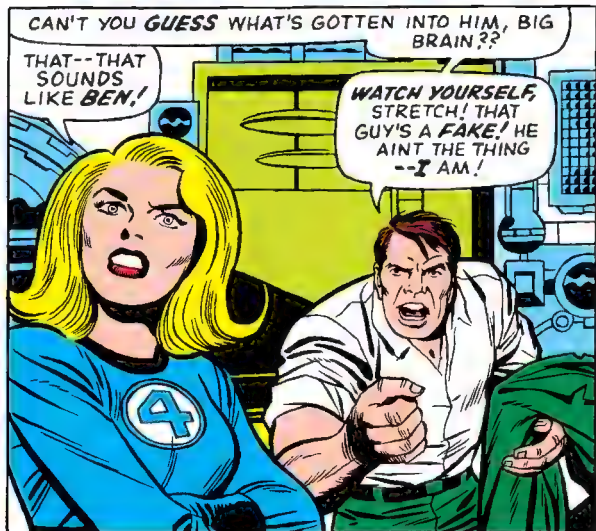
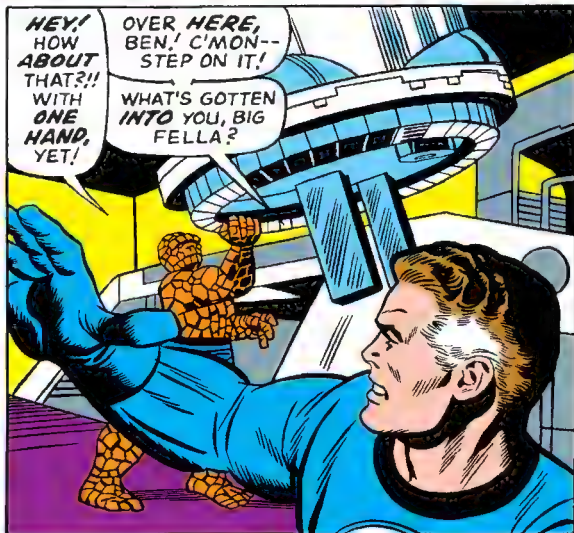
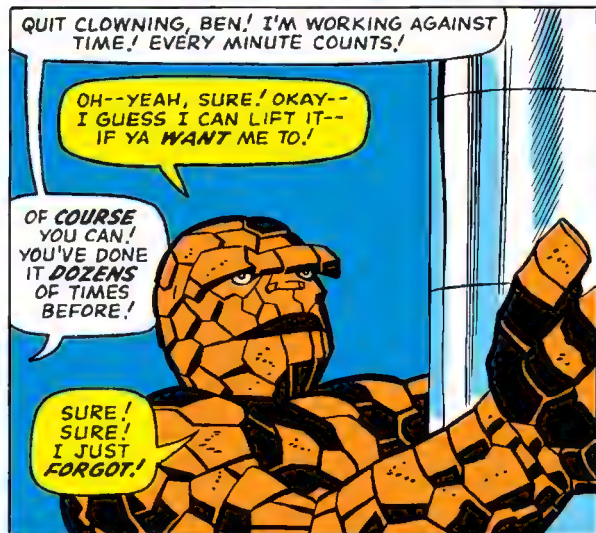
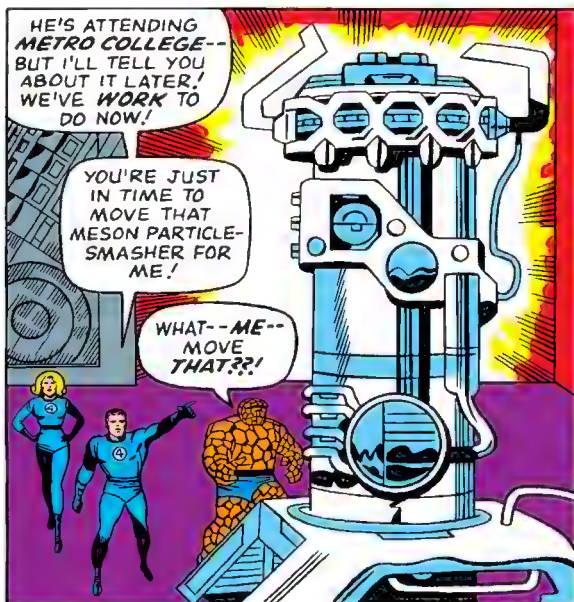


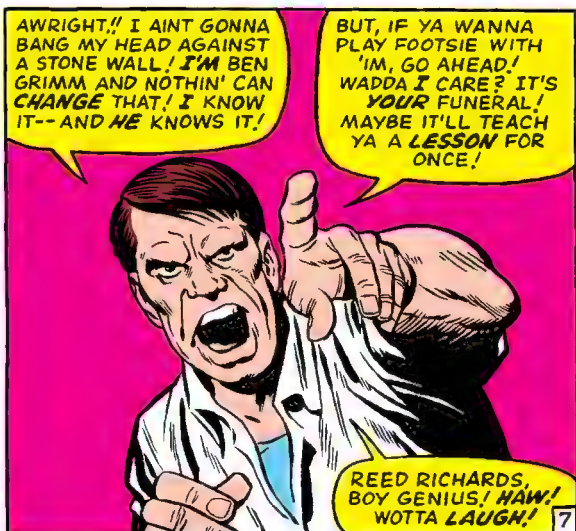
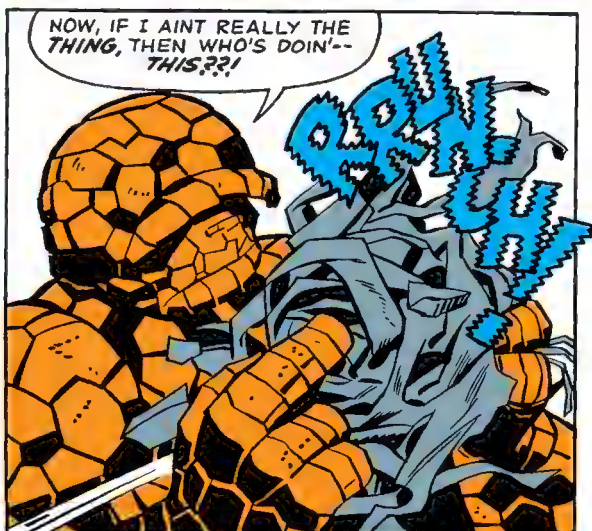
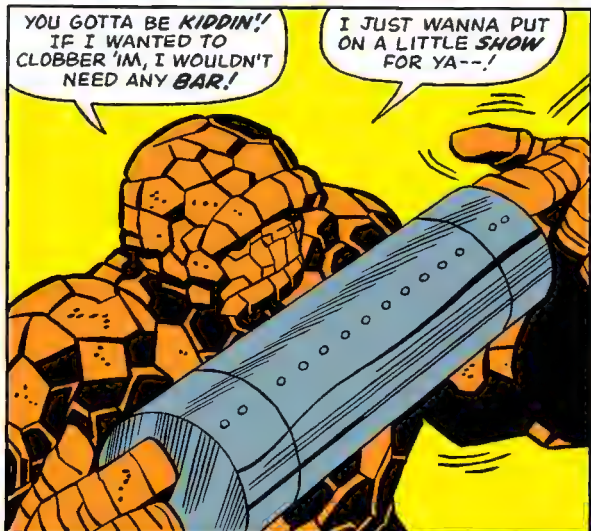
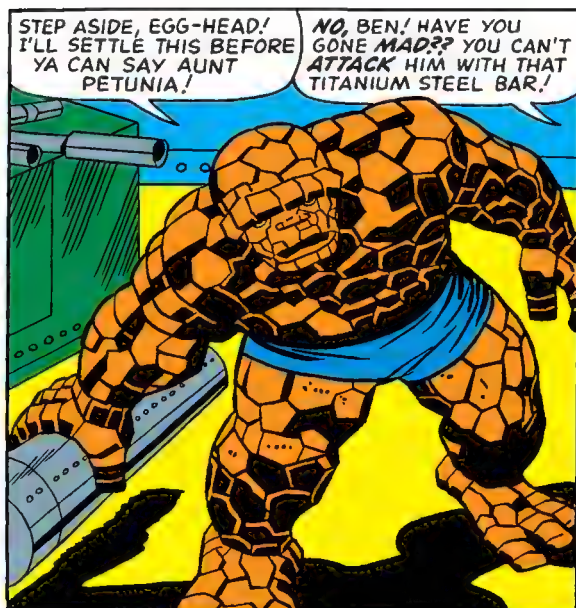
BUT, BEFORE THE PUZZLED GIRL CAN REPLY, A FAMILIAR VOICE BOOMS OUT--

WHAT'SZIS ABOUT A LOCKED ROOM, STRETCHO?

BEN! YOU'RE BACK!

SURE! IT'S NICE 'A YA TO NOTICE!







IT'S **INCREDIBLE!** NOT ONLY IS HE A **DEAD-RINGER** FOR YOU, BEN, BUT HE **SOUNDS** JUST LIKE YOU!

BIG DEAL! HE'S PROBABLY BEEN TAKIN' **ELECTION** LESSONS! TOO BAD I HADDA BLOW THE GUY'S GIMMICK-- I WONDER WHAT HE WUZ AFTER?

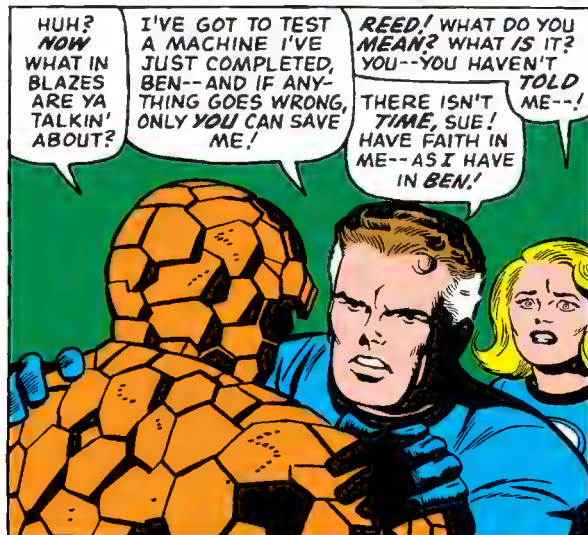


Y'KNOW, FER A MINUTE THERE I THOUGHT YA WUZ STARTIN' TO **BELIEVE** THAT PHONY!

IF HIS STORY WEREN'T SO **IMPOSSIBLE**-- HE **DID** SEEM TO BE BEN GRIMM!

NOW DON'T GET HUFFY, BENJAMIN! YOU KNOW I'D TRUST YOU WITH MY **LIFE!**

IN FACT, THAT'S JUST WHAT I'M ABOUT TO **DO!**

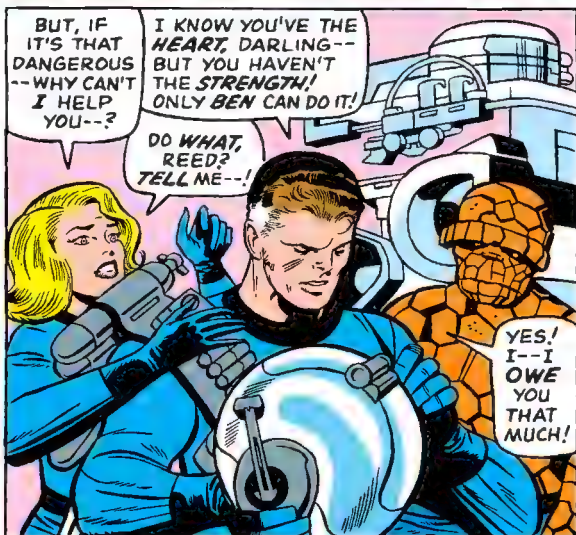


HUH? **NOW** WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YA TALKIN' ABOUT?

I'VE GOT TO TEST A MACHINE I'VE JUST COMPLETED, BEN-- AND IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, ONLY **YOU** CAN SAVE ME!

REED! WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT IS IT? YOU--YOU HAVEN'T

TOLD ME--! THERE ISN'T **TIME**, SUE! HAVE FAITH IN ME-- AS I HAVE IN **BEN!**

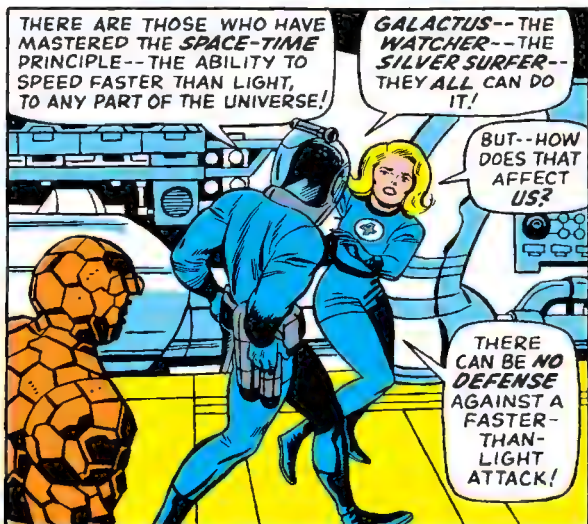


BUT, IF IT'S THAT DANGEROUS --WHY CAN'T I HELP YOU--?

I KNOW YOU'VE THE **HEART**, DARLING-- BUT YOU HAVEN'T THE **STRENGTH!** ONLY BEN CAN DO IT!

DO WHAT, REED? TELL ME--!

YES! I--I OWE YOU THAT MUCH!

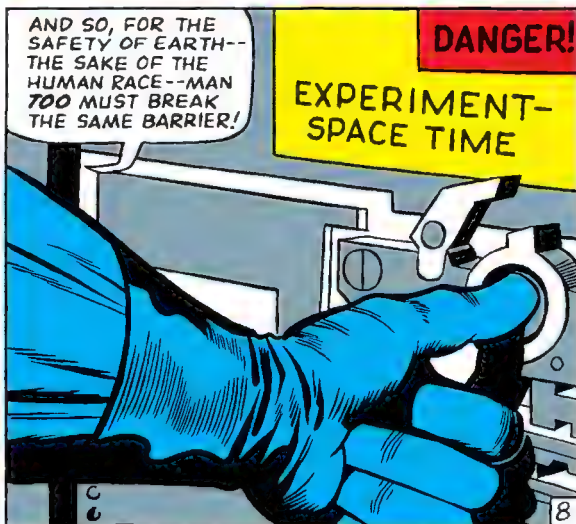


THERE ARE THOSE WHO HAVE MASTERED THE **SPACE-TIME** PRINCIPLE-- THE ABILITY TO SPEED FASTER THAN LIGHT, TO ANY PART OF THE UNIVERSE!

GALACTUS-- THE **WATCHER--** THE **SILVER SURFER--** THEY ALL CAN DO IT!

BUT--HOW DOES THAT AFFECT US?

THERE CAN BE **NO** DEFENSE AGAINST A FASTER-THAN-LIGHT ATTACK!



AND SO, FOR THE SAFETY OF EARTH-- THE SAKE OF THE HUMAN RACE--MAN **TOO** MUST BREAK THE SAME BARRIER!

DANGER!

EXPERIMENT-- SPACE TIME

AND THEN--
THEY ENTER
THE LOCKED
ROOM--
WHERE THEY
FIND--!

THIS HUGE, RADICAL
CUBE IS DESIGNED
TO CREATE A
DIMENSIONAL ENTRANCE
INTO *SUB-SPACE*, WHICH
IS THE AREA I MUST
EXPLORE!

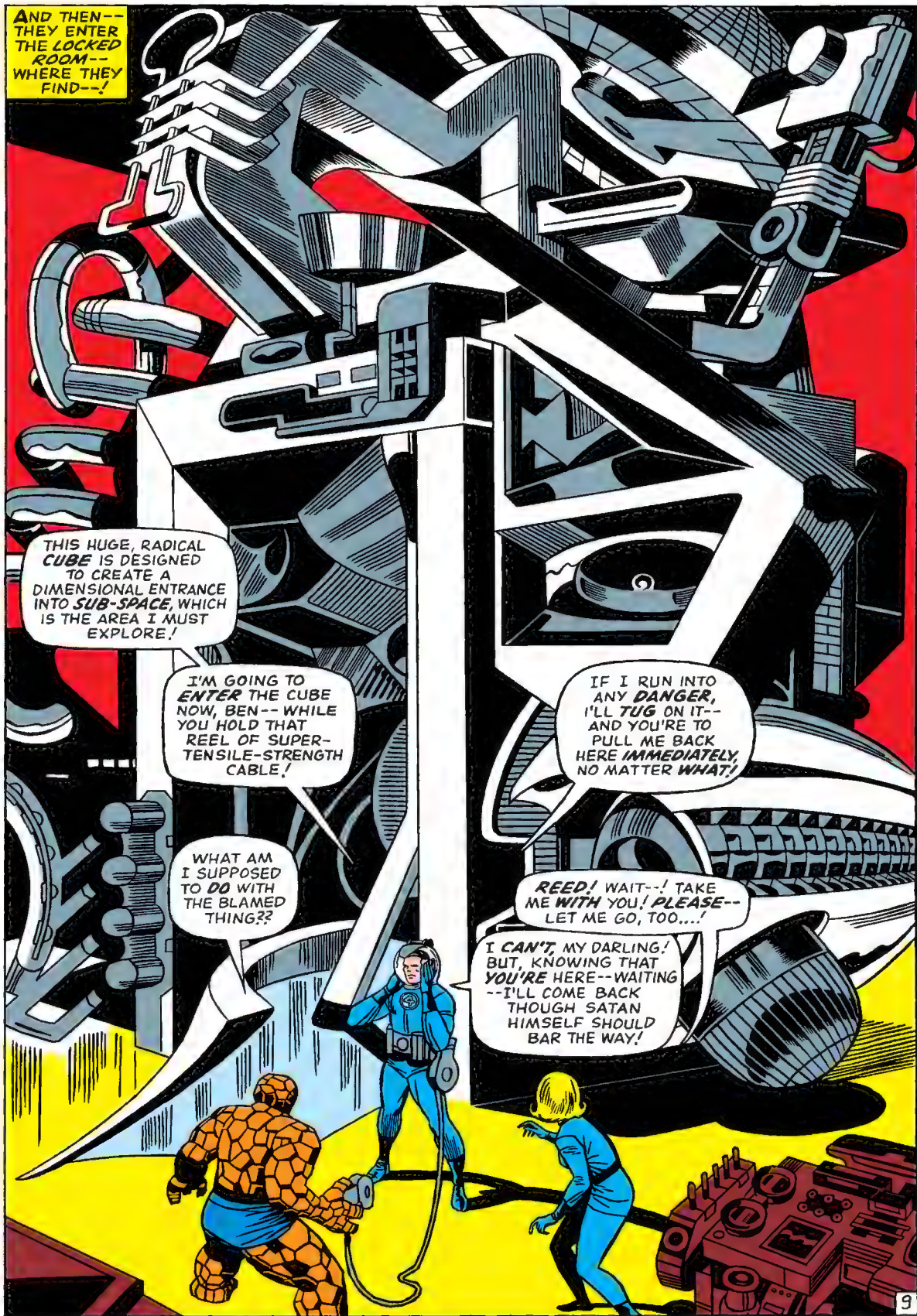
I'M GOING TO
ENTER THE CUBE
NOW, BEN-- WHILE
YOU HOLD THAT
REEL OF SUPER-
TENSILE-STRENGTH
CABLE!

WHAT AM
I SUPPOSED
TO DO WITH
THE BLAMED
THING??

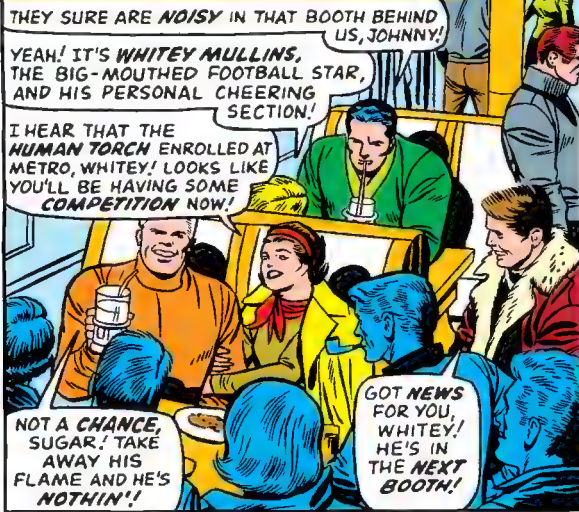
IF I RUN INTO
ANY *DANGER*,
I'LL TUG ON IT--
AND YOU'RE TO
PULL ME BACK
HERE *IMMEDIATELY*,
NO MATTER *WHAT*!

REED! WAIT--! TAKE
ME WITH YOU! PLEASE--
LET ME GO, TOO...!

I CAN'T, MY DARLING!
BUT, KNOWING THAT
YOU'RE HERE--WAITING
--I'LL COME BACK
THOUGH SATAN
HIMSELF SHOULD
BAR THE WAY!



AT THAT VERY MOMENT, UNAWARE OF THE CRISIS RAPIDLY DEVELOPING AT F.F. HEADQUARTERS, JOHNNY STORM AND HIS COLLEGE ROOMMATE, WYATT WINGFOOT, ARE AT THE KOZY KAMPUS KOFFEE SHOP...



THEY SURE ARE NOISY IN THAT BOOTH BEHIND US, JOHNNY!

YEAH! IT'S WHITEY MULLINS, THE BIG-MOULDED FOOTBALL STAR, AND HIS PERSONAL CHEERING SECTION!

I HEAR THAT THE HUMAN TORCH ENROLLED AT METRO, WHITEY! LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL BE HAVING SOME COMPETITION NOW!

NOT A CHANCE, SUGAR! TAKE AWAY HIS FLAME AND HE'S NOTHIN'!

GOT NEWS FOR YOU, WHITEY! HE'S IN THE NEXT BOOTH!

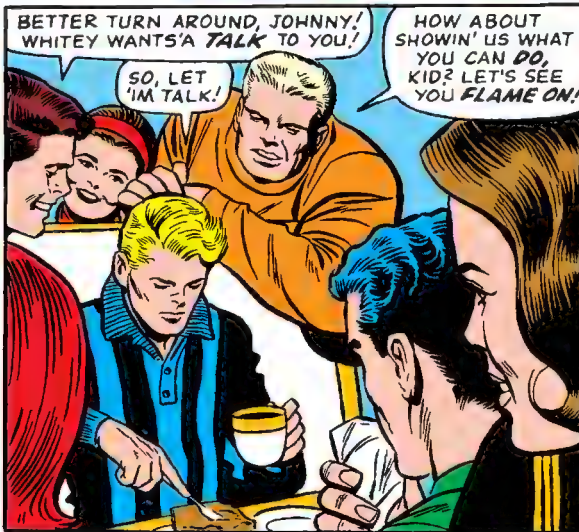


YOU'RE JOHNNY STORM, RIGHT? SAY HELLO TO WHITEY MULLINS!

SO THAT'S THE FAMOUS HUMAN TORCH! BIG DEAL!

OKAY--HELLO!

NO--HE'S NOT WHITEY!



BETTER TURN AROUND, JOHNNY! WHITEY WANTS A TALK TO YOU!

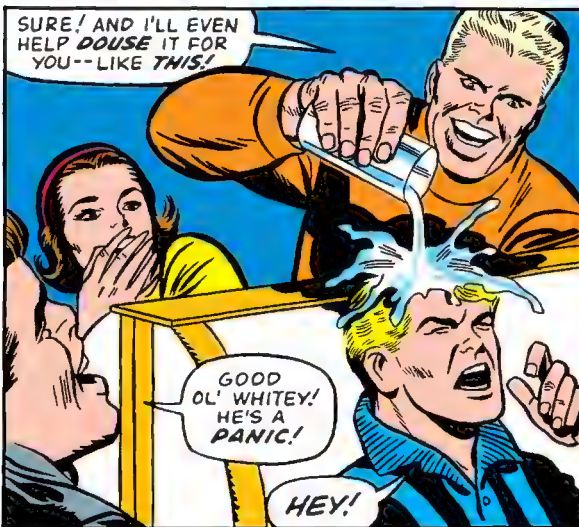
SO, LET 'IM TALK!

HOW ABOUT SHOWIN' US WHAT YOU CAN DO, KID? LET'S SEE YOU FLAME ON!



ALL RIGHT, IF IT'LL GET RID OF YOU SO I CAN FINISH MY JAVA IN PEACE!

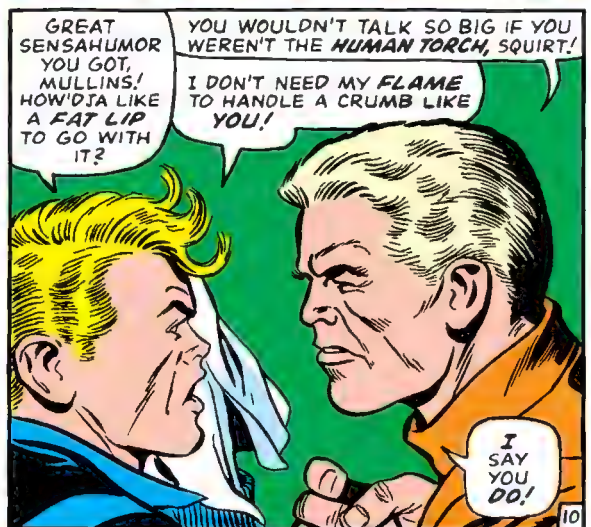
HERE!--SATISFIED??



SURE! AND I'LL EVEN HELP DOUSE IT FOR YOU--LIKE THIS!

GOOD OL' WHITEY! HE'S A PANIC!

HEY!

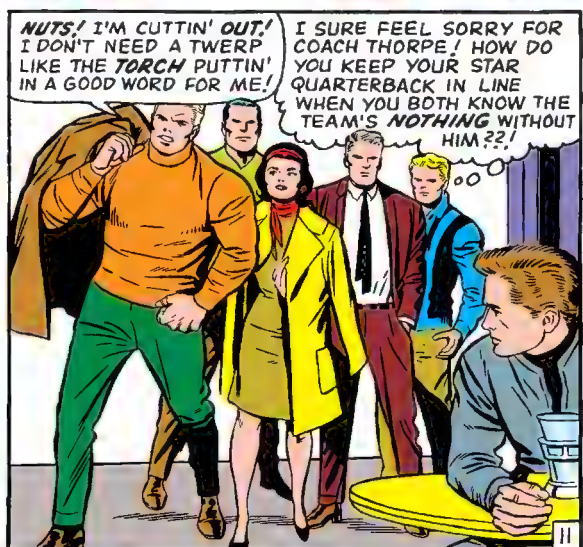
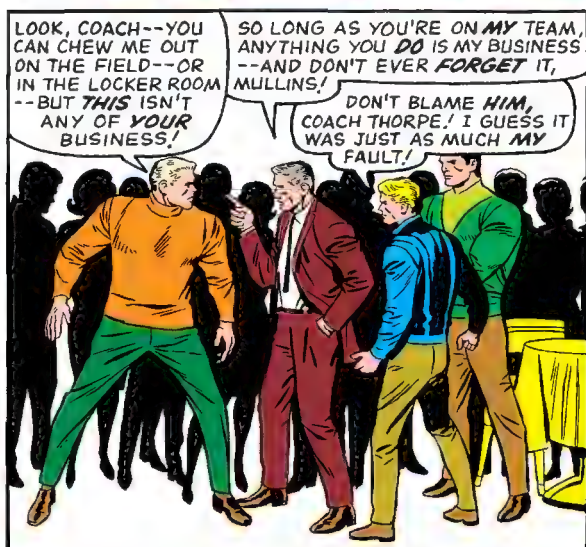
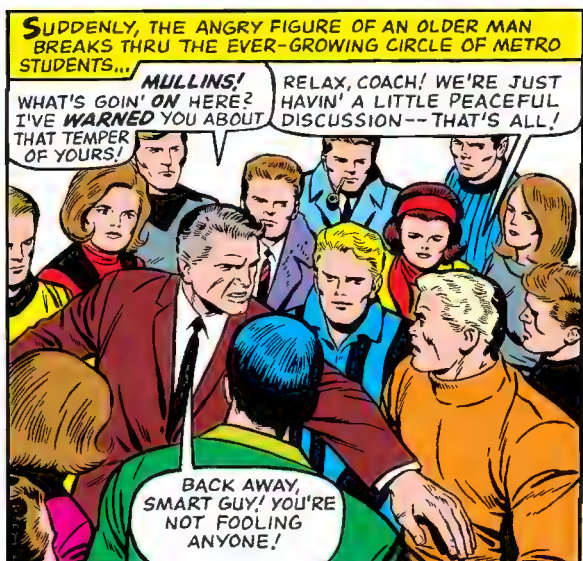
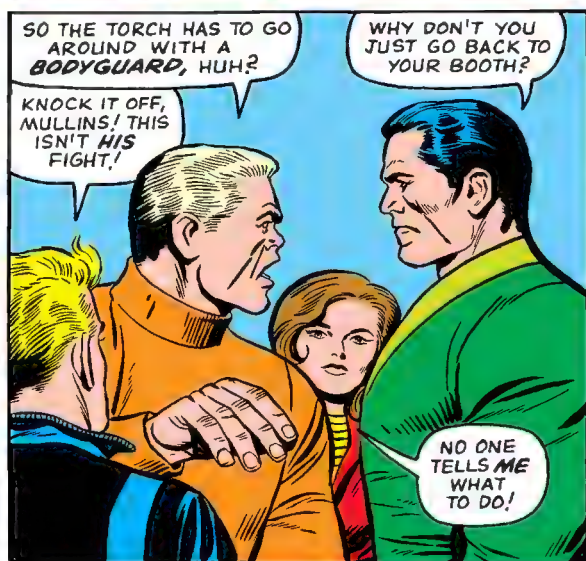


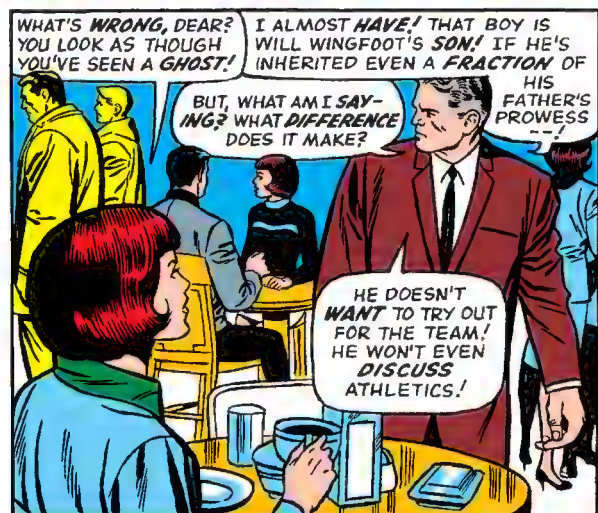
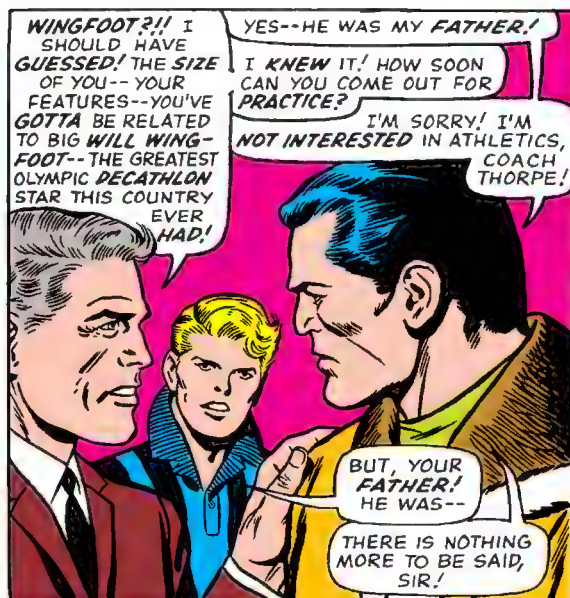
GREAT SENSAHUMOR YOU GOT, MULLINS! HOW'DJA LIKE A FAT LIP TO GO WITH IT?

YOU WOULDN'T TALK SO BIG IF YOU WEREN'T THE HUMAN TORCH, SQUIRT!

I DON'T NEED MY FLAME TO HANDLE A CRUMB LIKE YOU!

I SAY YOU DO!





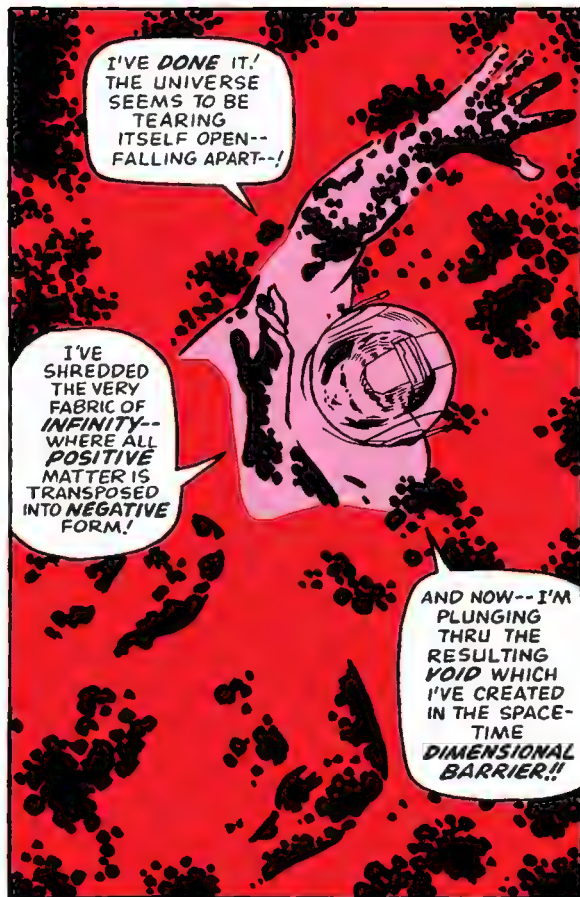


REMEMBER, BEN--
DON'T LET GO OF
THAT LINE! MY
LIFE IS IN YOUR
HANDS!

THERE CAN BE NO TURNING BACK
NOW! ONCE I PUSH THIS LEVER,
THE PHASE-DRIVE MECHANISM
WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ACTIVATED!
IT *MUST* BE DONE--NO MATTER
WHAT--!

NOW!

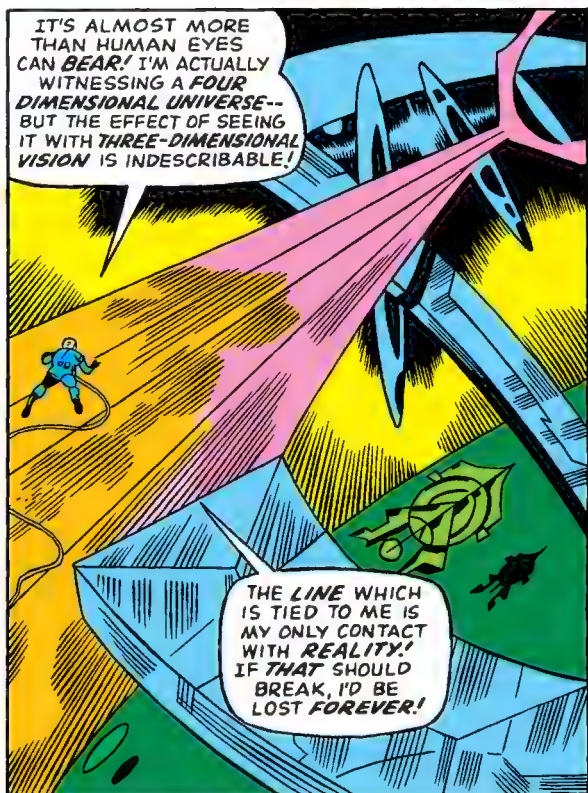
CLACKK!



I'VE *DONE* IT!
THE UNIVERSE
SEEMS TO BE
TEARING
ITSELF OPEN--
FALLING APART--!

I'VE
SHREDDED
THE VERY
FABRIC OF
INFINITY--
WHERE ALL
POSITIVE
MATTER IS
TRANPOSED
INTO *NEGATIVE*
FORM!

AND NOW-- I'M
PLUNGING
THRU THE
RESULTING
VOID WHICH
I'VE CREATED
IN THE SPACE-
TIME
DIMENSIONAL
BARRIER!!



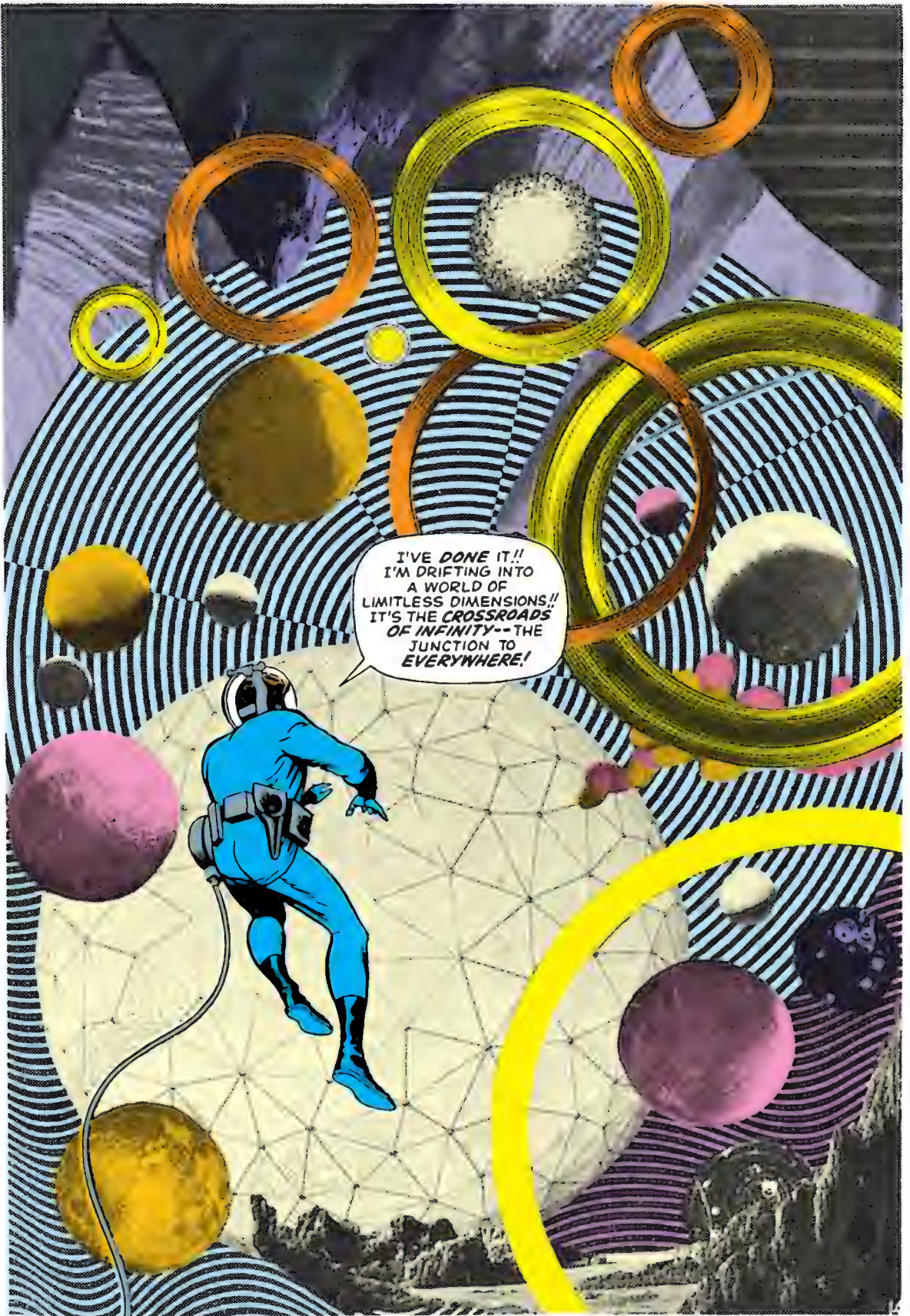
IT'S ALMOST MORE
THAN HUMAN EYES
CAN *BEAR*! I'M ACTUALLY
WITNESSING A *FOUR*
DIMENSIONAL UNIVERSE--
BUT THE EFFECT OF SEEING
IT WITH *THREE-DIMENSIONAL*
VISION IS INDESCRIBABLE!

THE *LINE* WHICH
IS TIED TO ME IS
MY ONLY CONTACT
WITH *REALITY*!
IF *THAT* SHOULD
BREAK, I'D BE
LOST *FOREVER*!

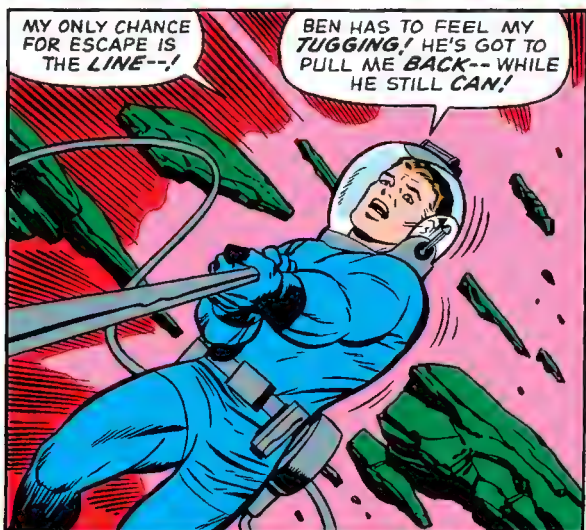
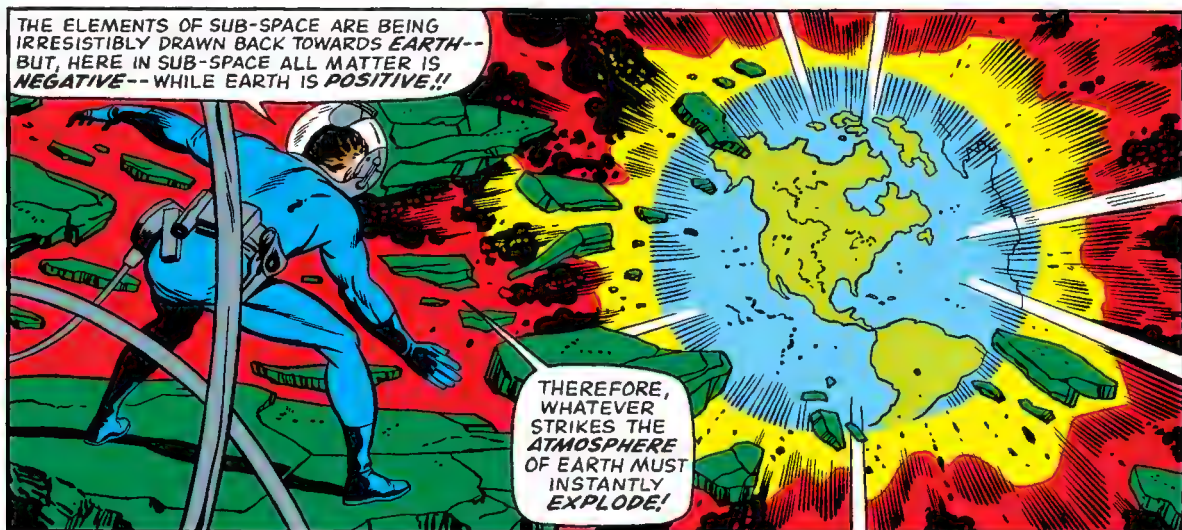


EVERYTHING IS
MOVING *FASTER* NOW!
THE UNIVERSE HAS
BECOME A VAST
KALEIDOSCOPE OF
LIGHT AND SOUND!!
THERE'S ONLY ONE
EXPLANATION--

-- I'M FINALLY
APPROACHING MY GOAL!
I'M AT THE VERY
EDGE OF *SUB-SPACE*!



I'VE DONE IT!!
I'M DRIFTING INTO
A WORLD OF
LIMITLESS DIMENSIONS!!
IT'S THE *CROSSROADS*
OF INFINITY--THE
JUNCTION TO
EVERYWHERE!



AND, AT THE OTHER END OF THE FATEFUL LINE, WE FIND--

HE'S **TUGGING!** ALL I GOTTA DO IS **IGNORE** HIM, AND I'LL HAVE BEATEN THE ONE MAN I'VE ALWAYS ENVIED--THE ONE MAN NO ONE **ELSE** COULD EVER DEFEAT!

BUT--ALL OF A SUDDEN, I **DON'T** ENVY HIM ANY MORE! I-I NEVER KNEW HOW **BRAVE** HE WAS --HOW **UNSELFISH**--!

BEN! THE LINE IS GROWING **TAUT!** IT'S **REED!** IT'S HIS **SIGNAL!**

ALL THESE YEARS--WHEN I THOUGHT I NEVER GOT THE BREAKS--NOW I KNOW THE **TRUTH!** IT WAS **MY** FAULT--NOBODY ELSE'S! I WOULDN'T WORK **HARD** ENOUGH--I WOULDN'T MAKE THE SACRIFICES THAT A **REED RICHARDS** WOULD--!

PULL HIM IN, BEN! QUICKLY-- BEN!

I NEVER SAW THINGS SO **CLEAR** BEFORE! IT--IT'S ALMOST LIKE I'VE **REALLY** BECOME THE **THING**--NOT JUST AN IMITATION!

BEN!! FOR THE LOVE OF **HEAVEN--!**

I NEVER DID A WORTHWHILE THING IN MY WHOLE LIFE!! BUT NOW--I'VE FINALLY GOT THE **CHANCE!** I CAN **REALLY BE BEN GRIMM!**

I'VE GOTTA **DO IT!** I'LL **SAVE** RICHARDS!!

DON'T WORRY, LADY!! I'LL GET 'IM-- **NOW!**

BUT, BEFORE THE STRANGE CHANGELING CAN MAKE A MOVE--

I-I **WAITED** TOO LONG!!! IT **SNAPPED!!**

HE'S **DONE FOR!!** AND--IT'S BECAUSE OF **ME!**

OH NO! **NOOOO!**

I'VE GOT TO GO TO HIM!! HE CAN'T BE LEFT ALONE IN THERE!! HE **NEEDS** ME! HE **NEEDS** ME!!

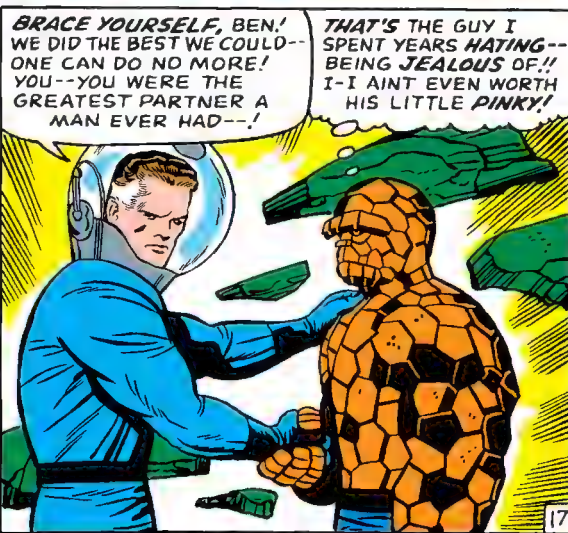
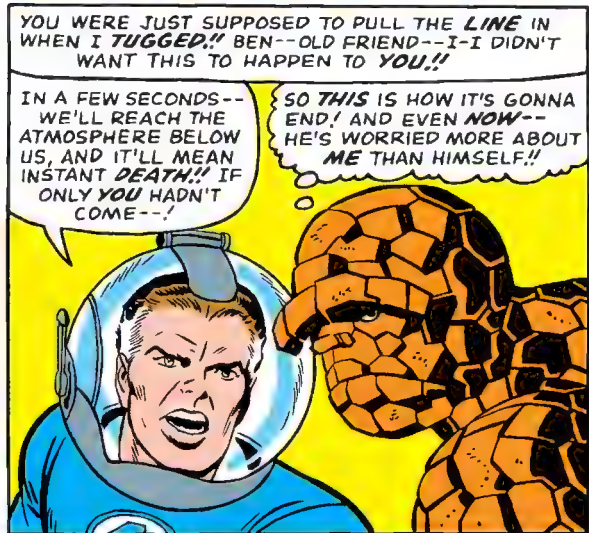
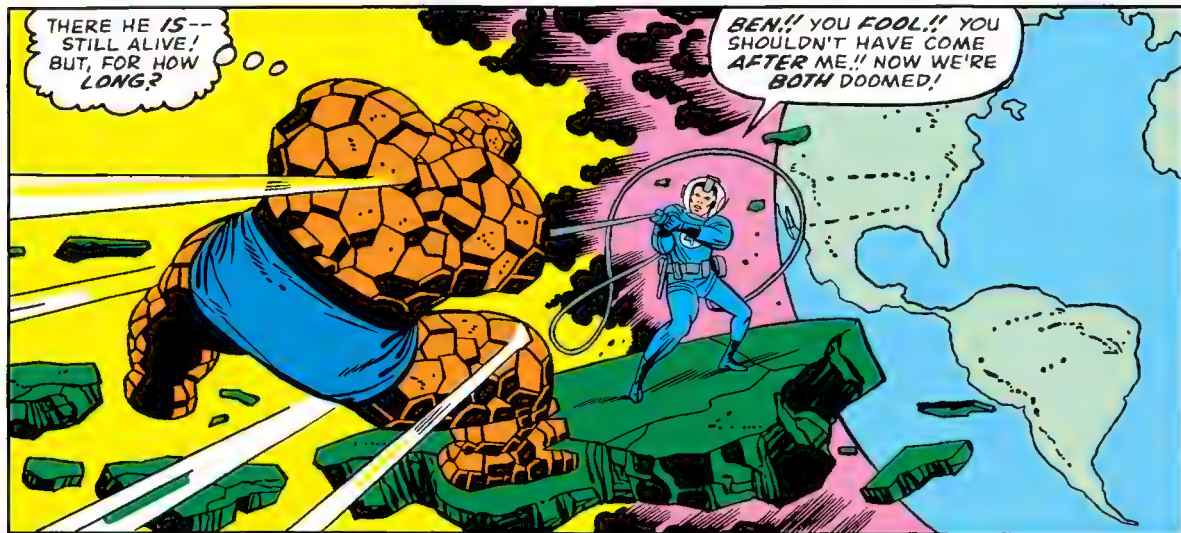
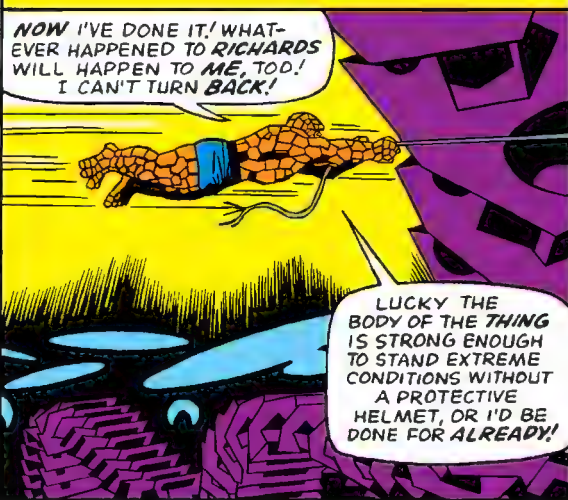
STAY BACK, DO Y'HEAR?? STAY BACK!! THERE'S NOTHIN' **YOU** CAN DO! WHATEVER'S HAPPENIN' TO 'IM IN THERE--ONLY A MASS OF **MUSCLE** CAN HELP!

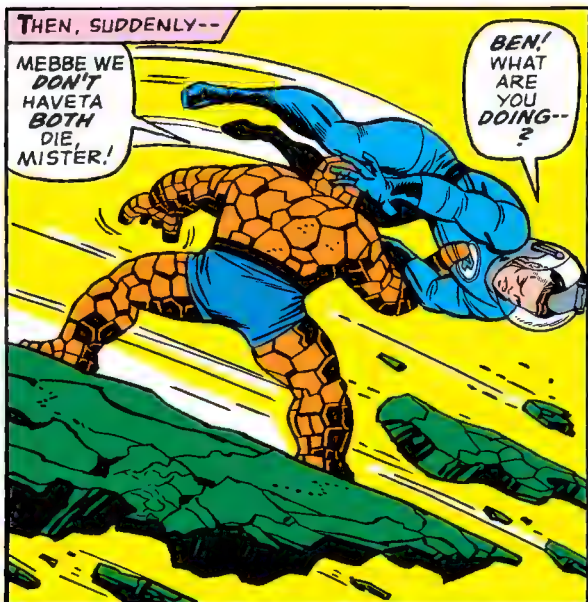
YOU WAIT OUT **THERE** BABY! I'LL **WHISTLE** IF I NEED YA!

MEBBE, IF I'M **LUCKY,** I CAN STILL GRAB THAT BUSTED HUNK'A LINE--BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!



BUT, IN MAKING HIS LAST-DITCH, DESPERATE LEAP AFTER THE THIN STRAND OF CABLE, THE MAN WITH THE *THING'S* BODY IS *HIMSELF* INSTANTLY DRAWN INTO THE INCREDIBLE BARRIER BETWEEN THE DIMENSIONS--





THEN, SUDDENLY--

MEBBE WE
DON'T
HAVETA
BOTH
DIE
MISTER!

BEN!
WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING--
?



THE ONE WORTHWHILE
THING I EVER DID IN MY
WHOLE, WASTED LIFE!!

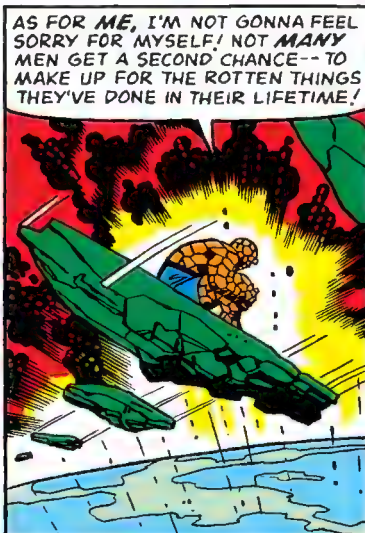
EVEN THE STRENGTH
WHICH I NOW POSSESS,
I STOLE FROM ANOTHER!

BUT,
MAYBE I
CAN USE
THAT
STRENGTH--
TO EVEN
THE
SCORE--
SOMEHOW!



I TOSSED HIM BACK IN EXACTLY
THE SAME DIRECTION I CAME FROM!
HE'S OUTTA SIGHT NOW-- SO, I'LL
NEVER KNOW--!

SO LONG, RICHARDS!
I HOPE YOU
MAKE IT!



AS FOR ME, I'M NOT GONNA FEEL
SORRY FOR MYSELF! NOT MANY
MEN GET A SECOND CHANCE-- TO
MAKE UP FOR THE ROTTEN THINGS
THEY'VE DONE IN THEIR LIFETIME!



I GUESS I'M LUCKIER THAN
MOST--! I GOT THAT CHANCE!

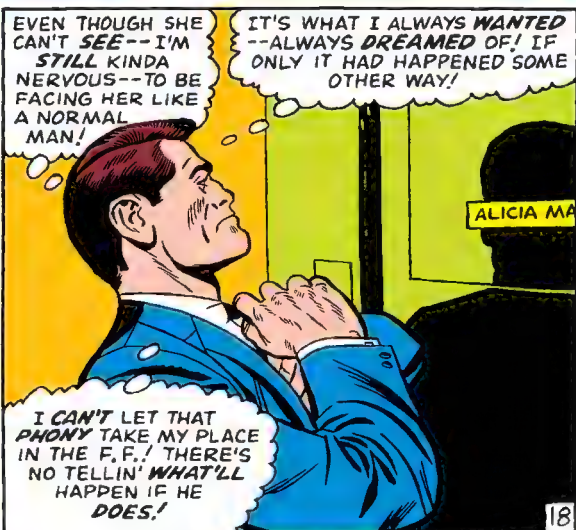
FOR, I FINALLY
LEARNED--WHAT
IT MEANS TO
HAVE--A FRIEND!



AND, AT THAT MOMENT, IN ANOTHER SECTION OF OUR
VAST, UNFATHOMABLE UNIVERSE--UNAWARE OF THE DIRE
DANGER CONFRONTING REED RICHARDS, THE REAL BEN
GRIMM PREPARES TO PAY A CALL--

MY ONLY HOPE IS THAT
ALICIA WILL BE ABLE
TO TELL WHO I AM!

BEING BLIND, SHE'S
MORE SENSITIVE TO A
PERSON'S TRUE SELF THAN
ANYONE WITH SIGHT
COULD BE!



EVEN THOUGH SHE
CAN'T SEE--I'M
STILL KINDA
NERVOUS--TO BE
FACING HER LIKE
A NORMAL
MAN!

IT'S WHAT I ALWAYS WANTED
--ALWAYS DREAMED OF! IF
ONLY IT HAD HAPPENED SOME
OTHER WAY!

I CAN'T LET THAT
PHONY TAKE MY PLACE
IN THE F.F.! THERE'S
NO TELLIN' WHAT'LL
HAPPEN IF HE
DOES!

ALICIA MA

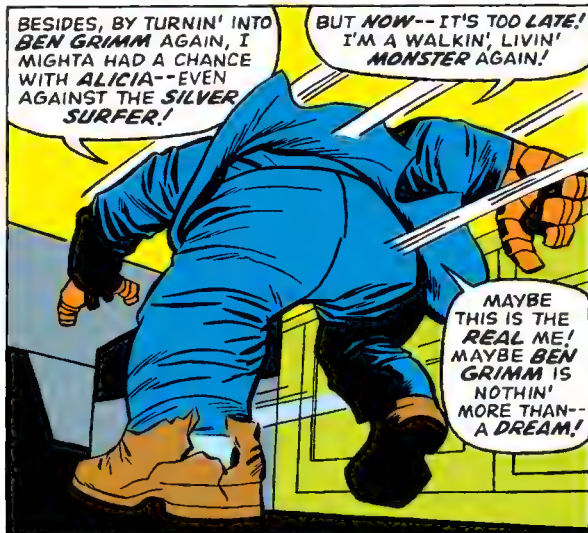
BUT THEN, AS BEN GRIMM KNOCKS ON THE DOOR OF ALICIA MASTERS--HE SEES--



STARTLED--SHOCKED--STUNNED INTO SPEECHLESSNESS--HE HAS NO WAY OF KNOWING THAT, A UNIVERSE AWAY, THE MAN WHO HAD TAKEN HIS IDENTITY HAS NOW GIVEN IT UP AGAIN--FOREVER!



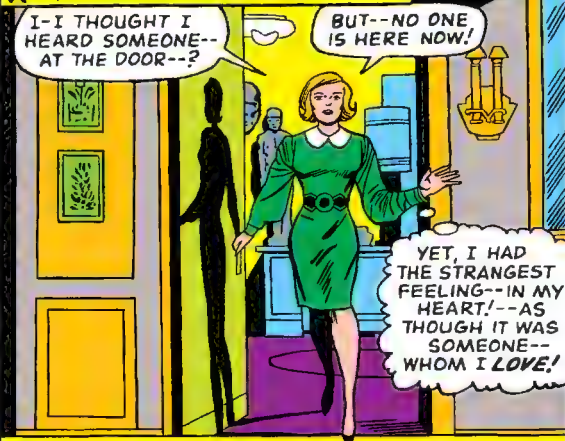
FINALLY, WHEN THE INITIAL NUMBERED REACTION HAS PASSED...



BUT NOW--IT'S TOO LATE! I'M A WALKIN', LIVIN' MONSTER AGAIN!

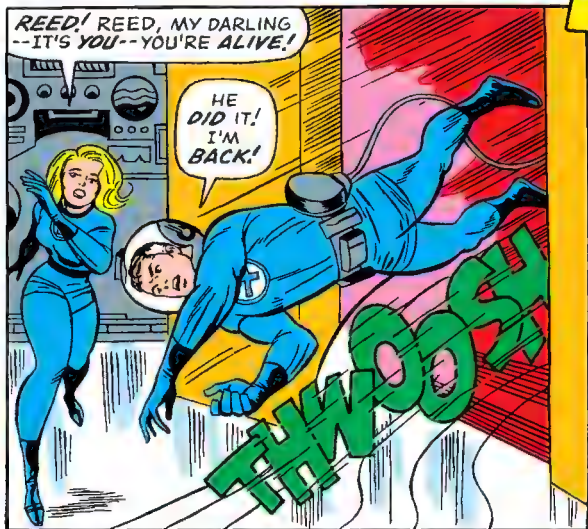
MAYBE THIS IS THE REAL ME! MAYBE BEN GRIMM IS NOTHIN' MORE THAN--A DREAM!

AND, A SCANT FEW SECONDS LATER...

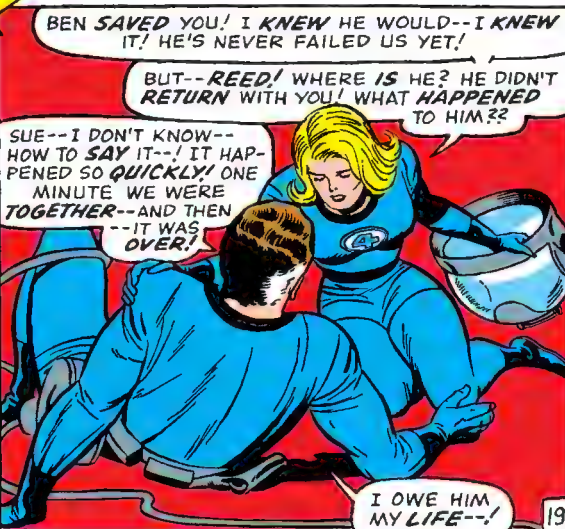


YET, I HAD THE STRANGEST FEELING--IN MY HEART!--AS THOUGH IT WAS SOMEONE--WHOM I LOVE!

BUT NOW, LET'S RUSH BACK TO THE BAXTER BUILDING BEFORE THE THING GETS THERE, BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS NEXT EVENT--

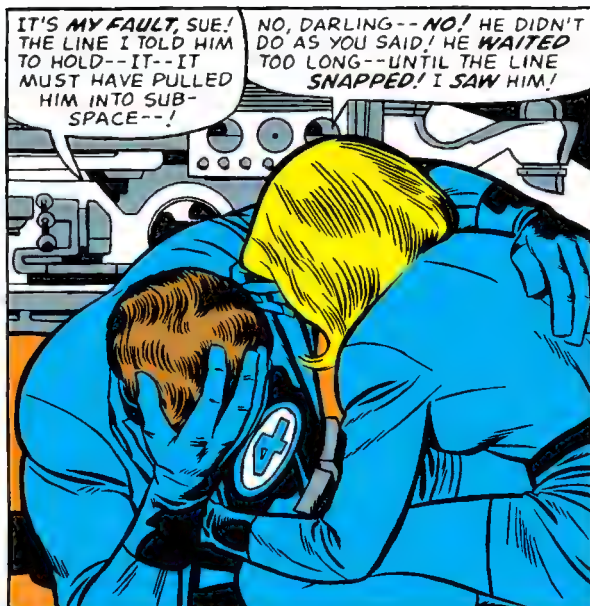


HE DID IT! I'M BACK!



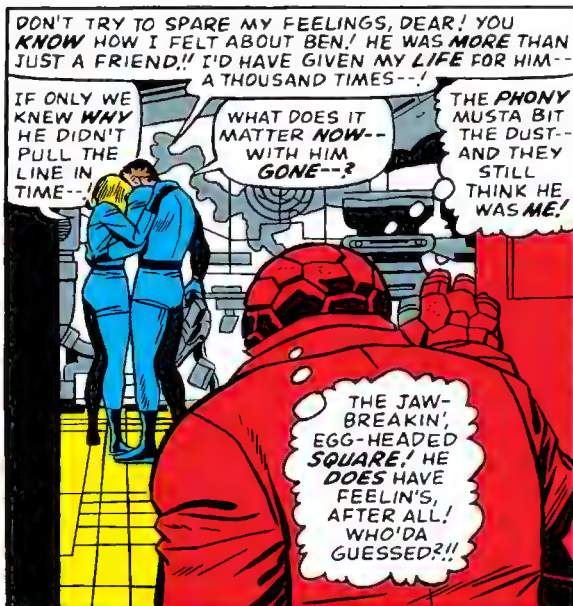
SUE--I DON'T KNOW--HOW TO SAY IT--! IT HAPPENED SO QUICKLY! ONE MINUTE WE WERE TOGETHER--AND THEN --IT WAS OVER!

I OWE HIM MY LIFE--!



IT'S MY FAULT, SUE! THE LINE I TOLD HIM TO HOLD--IT--IT MUST HAVE PULLED HIM INTO SUB-SPACE--!

NO, DARLING--NO! HE DIDN'T DO AS YOU SAID! HE **WAITED** TOO LONG--UNTIL THE LINE **SNAPPED!** I **SAW** HIM!



IF ONLY WE KNEW **WHY** HE DIDN'T PULL THE LINE IN TIME--

WHAT DOES IT MATTER **NOW**--WITH HIM **GONE**--?

THE **PHONY** MUSTA BIT THE DUST--AND THEY STILL THINK HE WAS **ME!**

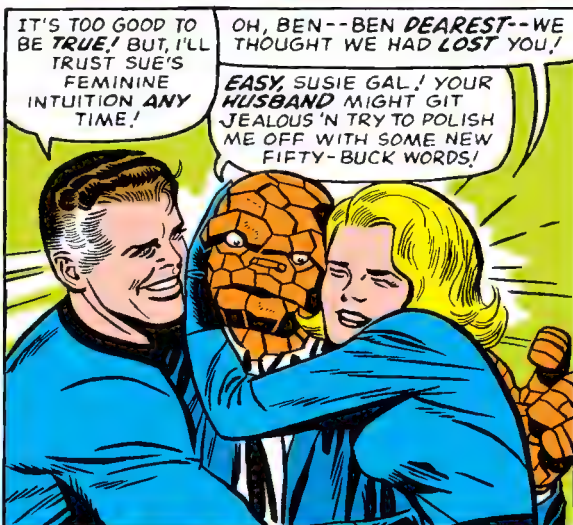
THE **JAW-BREAKIN', EGG-HEADED SQUARE!** HE **DOES** HAVE FEELIN'S, AFTER ALL! WHO'DA GUESSED?!!



YA CAN COOL THE CRYIN' TOWEL BIT NOW--I'M ALIVE 'N KICKIN'--LIKE ALWAYS! IT WAS THAT **OTHER** GUY I **WARNED** YA ABOUT WHO CASHED IN!

BEN! OR--OR IS IT BEN?? HOW CAN WE **KNOW**??

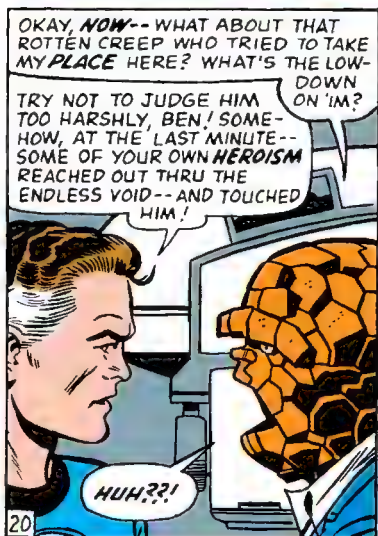
IT **IS** THE REAL BEN! I CAN **SENSE** IT, REED! **THAT'S** THE ANSWER I WAS LOOKING FOR--**THAT'S** WHY THE **OTHER** BEN DIDN'T PULL THE LINE IN TIME--HE WAS AN **IMPOSTOR!**



IT'S TOO GOOD TO BE **TRUE!** BUT, I'LL TRUST SUE'S FEMININE INTUITION **ANY** TIME!

OH, BEN--BEN **DEAREST**--WE THOUGHT WE HAD **LOST** YOU!

EASY, SUSIE GAL! YOUR **HUSBAND** MIGHT GIT JEALOUS 'N TRY TO POLISH ME OFF WITH SOME NEW FIFTY-BUCK WORDS!



OKAY, **NOW**--WHAT ABOUT THAT ROTTEN CREEP WHO TRIED TO TAKE MY **PLACE** HERE? WHAT'S THE **LOW-DOWN** ON 'IM?

TRY NOT TO JUDGE HIM TOO HARSHLY, BEN! SOMEHOW, AT THE LAST MINUTE--SOME OF YOUR OWN **HEROISM** REACHED OUT THRU THE ENDLESS VOID--AND TOUCHED HIM!

HUH??!



I'D **STILL** LIKE TO HAVE GOTTEN MY OWN PAWS ON 'IM JUST **ONCE**--!

IT'S TOO **LATE** FOR THAT NOW, OLD FRIEND!

WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT MONSTROUS THINGS HE HAD DONE IN THE PAST--OR, WHAT MONSTROUS PLANS HE HAD MADE!

BUT, **ONE** THING IS CERTAIN--



--HE PAID THE **FULL PRICE**--AND, HE PAID IT--LIKE A **MAN!**

NEXT ISSUE:
DESTINED TO BE THE MOST TALKED ABOUT NEW CHARACTER OF THE YEAR--
THE BLACK PANTHER!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

Fantastic Four

52
JULY

12¢

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

Introducing:
THE SENSATIONAL
**BLACK
PANTHER!**



THE FABULOUS F.F. ARE TRAPPED IN THE INCREDIBLE REALM OF.

"THE BLACK PANTHER!"

ALSO
FEATURING:
The WAY-OUT
and WONDERFUL
**WYATT
WINGFOOT!**



IT HAD TO BE
TOLD...AS ONLY
MIGHTY MARVEL
COULD TELL IT!

SCRIPT BY: SMILIN' **STAN LEE**
ART BY: JOLLY **JACKIE KIRBY**
INKING BY: GENTLEMAN **JOE SINNOTT**
LETTERING BY: HAMMY **SAMMY ROSEN**

VOTED
THE GREATEST
TALE OF THE MONTH!

(BY STAN AND JACK!)

WHEN YOU OR I GO FOR A SPIN, PUSSYCAT, WE HOP INTO THE OL' HOT ROD AND TAKE OFF! BUT, YOU WOULDN'T EXPECT THE *FA* TO BE AS CONVENTIONAL AS THAT, NOW, WOULD YOU?

HEY, STRETCH... WHEN DID YOU HAVE TIME TO DREAM UP A JAZZY FLYIN' FASTBACK LIKE THIS BABY?

I DIDN'T, BEN!

IT WAS AN UNEXPECTED GIFT... SENT TO ME BY AN AFRICAN CHIEFTAIN, CALLED... THE BLACK PANTHER!

IF ONLY JOHNNY WERE HOME FROM COLLEGE! HE'D BE IN SEVENTH HEAVEN BY NOW!

NEVER HEARD OF 'IM! BUT HOW DOES SOME REFUGEE FROM A TARZAN MOVIE LAY HIS HANDS ON THIS KINDA GIZMO?

'N WHY WOULD HE GIVE IT TO YOU?

HEY, EGGHEAD... WHAT HAPPENED? DIDJA LOSE CONTROL?

NO, BEN! RELAX... I JUST WANT TO SEE WHAT THIS SHIP WILL DO! ITS MANEUVERABILITY IS AMAZING!

IT SEEMS TO BE POWERED BY SOME SORT OF MAGNETIC WAVES...

AND, THESE PUSH-BUTTON CONTROLS MAKE HANDLING IT AS EASY AS DIALING A PHONE!

I WONDER HOW THE BLACK PANTHER... WHOEVER HE IS... GOT POSSESSION OF SUCH A SHIP?

BEN! IS ANYTHING WRONG? YOU'VE BEEN SO QUIET... AND, YOU DON'T LOOK SO WELL!

WITH A FACE LIKE MINE, HOW CAN YA TELL? BENJAMIN J. GRIMM! I'M

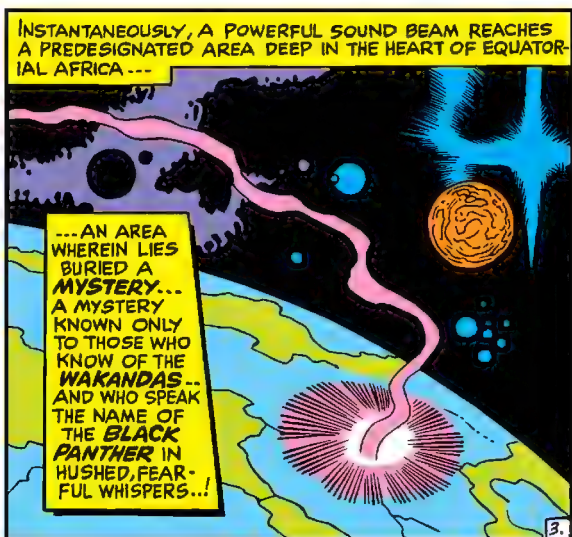
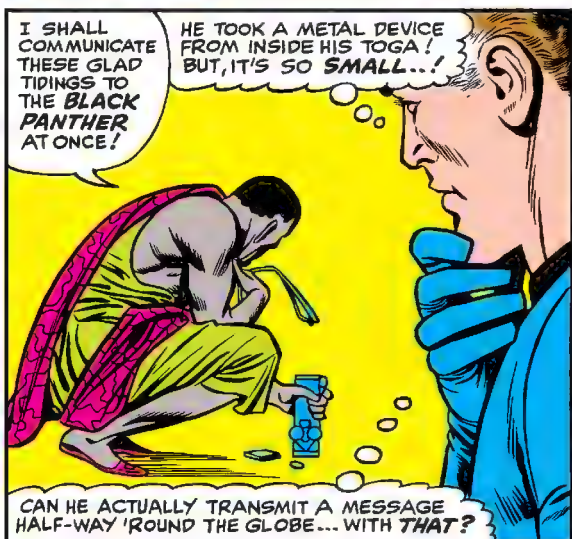
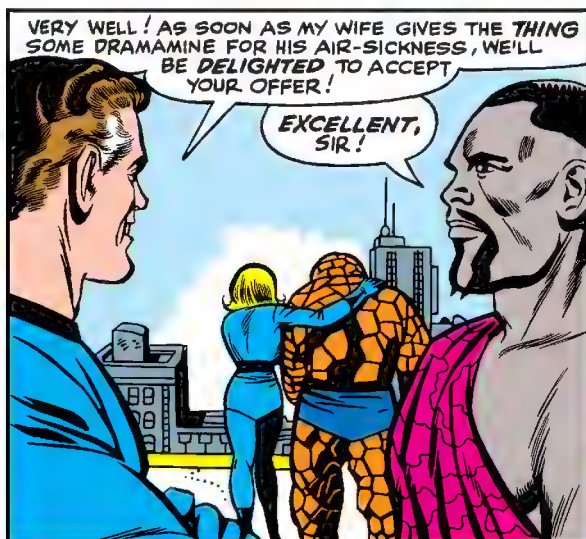
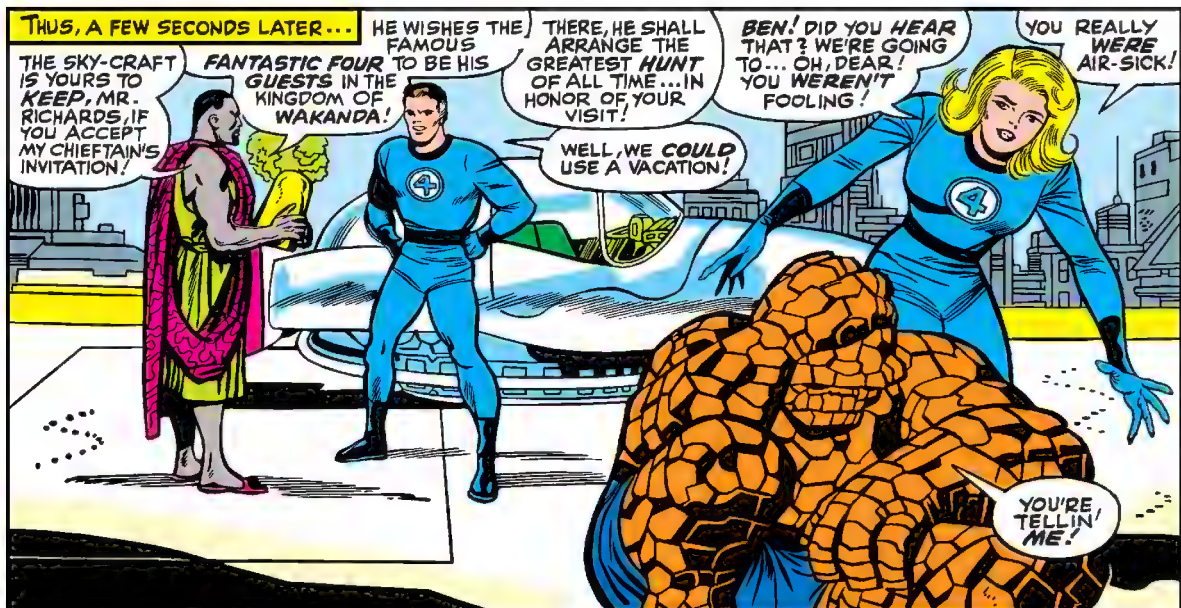
SURPRISED AT YOU! YOU... AN EX-AIR FORCE PILOT... AND THE STRONGEST MAN I KNOW... I THINK YOU'RE GETTING AIR-SICK!

IF WISHIN' YA COULD LAY DOWN 'N DIE IS A SYMPTOM --YER RIGHT, SUSIE!

I THINK BEN'S PUTTING YOU ON, HONEY!

BUT, I'LL HEAD FOR THE BAXTER BUILDING NOW, ANYWAY! THE BLACK PANTHER'S EMISSARY IS WAITING FOR US ON THE LANDING-ROOF..!

I'M ANXIOUS TO HAVE HIM TELL ME MORE ABOUT OUR MYSTERIOUS BENEFACTOR..!

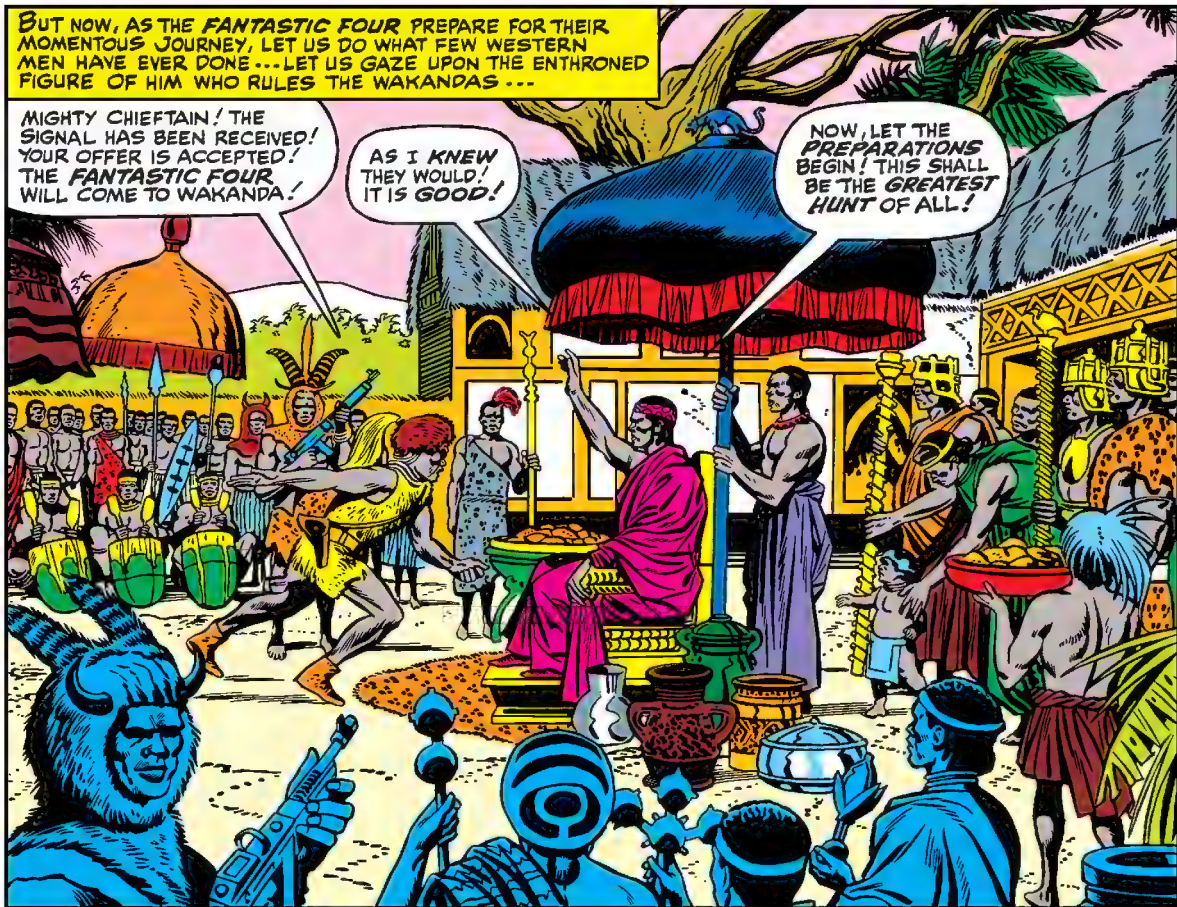


BUT NOW, AS THE **FANTASTIC FOUR** PREPARE FOR THEIR MOMENTOUS JOURNEY, LET US DO WHAT FEW WESTERN MEN HAVE EVER DONE...LET US GAZE UPON THE ENTHRONED FIGURE OF HIM WHO RULES THE WAKANDAS...

MIGHTY CHIEFTAIN! THE SIGNAL HAS BEEN RECEIVED! YOUR OFFER IS ACCEPTED! THE **FANTASTIC FOUR** WILL COME TO WAKANDA!

AS I KNEW THEY WOULD! IT IS GOOD!

NOW, LET THE PREPARATIONS BEGIN! THIS SHALL BE THE **GREATEST HUNT** OF ALL!



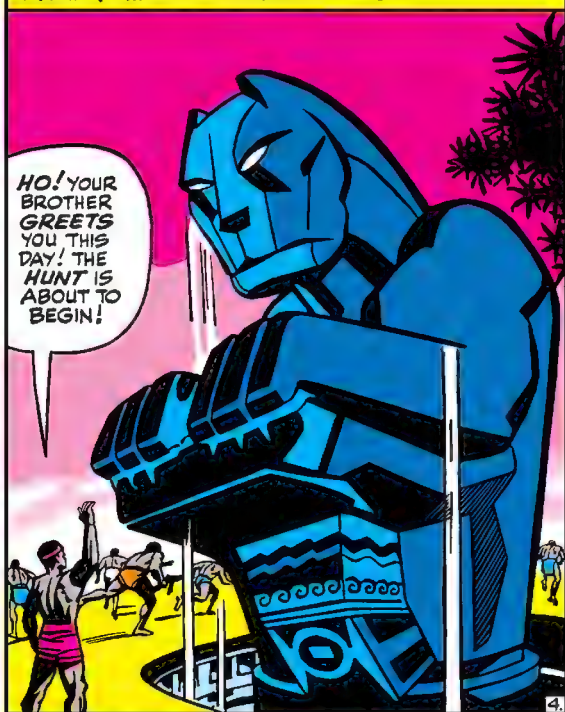
RAISE THE TOTEM! LET THE RITUAL BEGIN!

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE **BLACK PANTHER** TO STALK ONCE MORE!



THEN, AT A SINGLE GESTURE FROM THE PROUD CHIEFTAIN OF THE WAKANDAS, A STRANGE, CARVED FIGURE SWIFTLY RISES FROM ITS RESTING PLACE WITHIN A HIDDEN UNDERGROUND SILO...

HO! YOUR BROTHER GREET'S YOU THIS DAY! THE HUNT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!



DEFTLY PUSHING A SERIES OF DELICATE **CONTROL BUTTONS** AT THE BASE OF THE GIGANTIC, FELINE FIGURE, THE POWERFULLY-BUILT MONARCH EXPOSES A BANK OF **ELECTRONIC COMPUTERS**, WITH WHICH HE CONTROLS THE MYRIAD WONDERS OF HIS MYSTERIOUS JUNGLE EMPIRE...

ALL DEVICES ARE FULLY OPERATIONAL!

AND SO I REMOVE MY **STALKING COSTUME** FROM ITS CAREFULLY CONCEALED COMPARTMENT!

WHILE, IN A QUIET ROOM IN NORTHFIELD DORMITORY, ON THE CAMPUS OF METRO COLLEGE, WE FIND...

I WONDER IF I PASSED TODAY'S EXAM?

I SURE DON'T WANT REED, SUE AND BEN TO BE **ASHAMED** OF ME!

NOTHING BOTHERS OL' WYATT! I'M SURPRISED HE EVEN MANAGED TO STAY AWAKE DURING THE TEST!

I CAN'T WAIT TILL **MORNING**... TO HEAD BACK HOME FOR VACATION!

NOW, LET THE **FANTASTIC FOUR** COME!

THE **BLACK PANTHER** SHALL GREET THEM... AS THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN GREETED BEFORE!

IT'S HARD...HARDER THAN I **THOUGHT** IT WOULD BE...TO CONCENTRATE ON MY COURSES... WHEN I CAN'T GET **CRYSTAL** OUT OF MY MIND!

BUT, I'VE GOT TO KEEP **TRYING!** UNTIL REED CAN FIND SOME WAY TO BREAK THE **BARRIER** THAT HOLDS HER PRISONER,* THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO!

NOTHING BUT **HOPE**...AND **DREAM**...AND **PRAY!**

I'VE GOT TO SNAP OUT OF IT...AND I **WILL!** IF ONLY THE **EVENINGS** WEREN'T SO LONG...

*IF YOU MISSED F.F.#48, DON'T TELL US! YOU KNOW HOW UPSET WE GET. ... **SHAKY STAN.**

HEY!! HOLY HANNAH!! WHAT THE...?!!

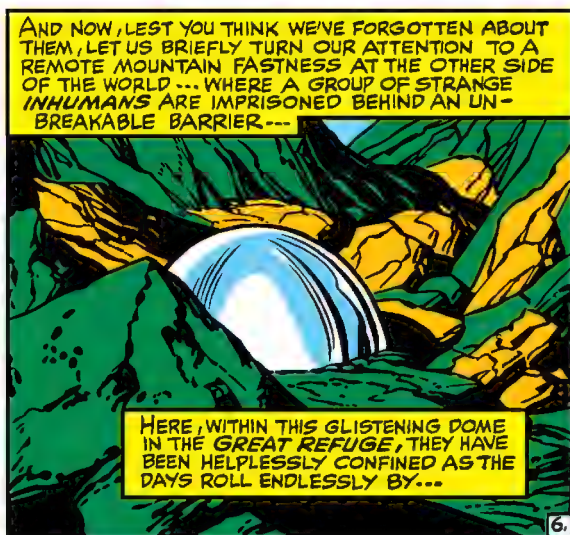
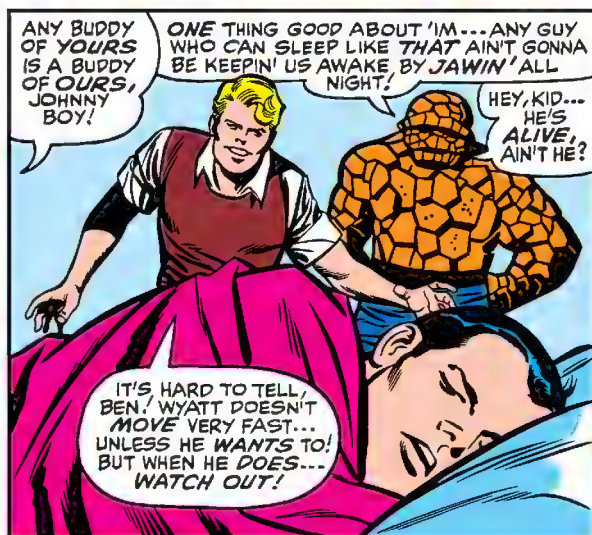
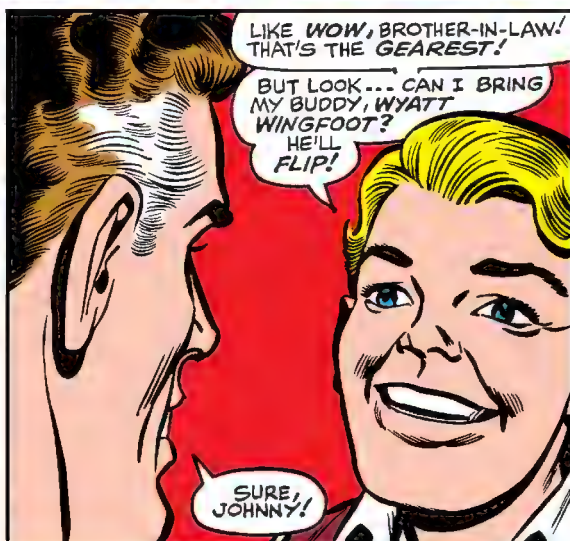
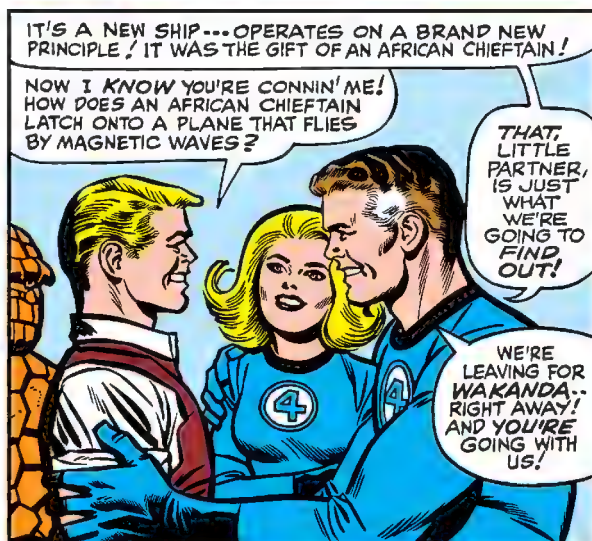
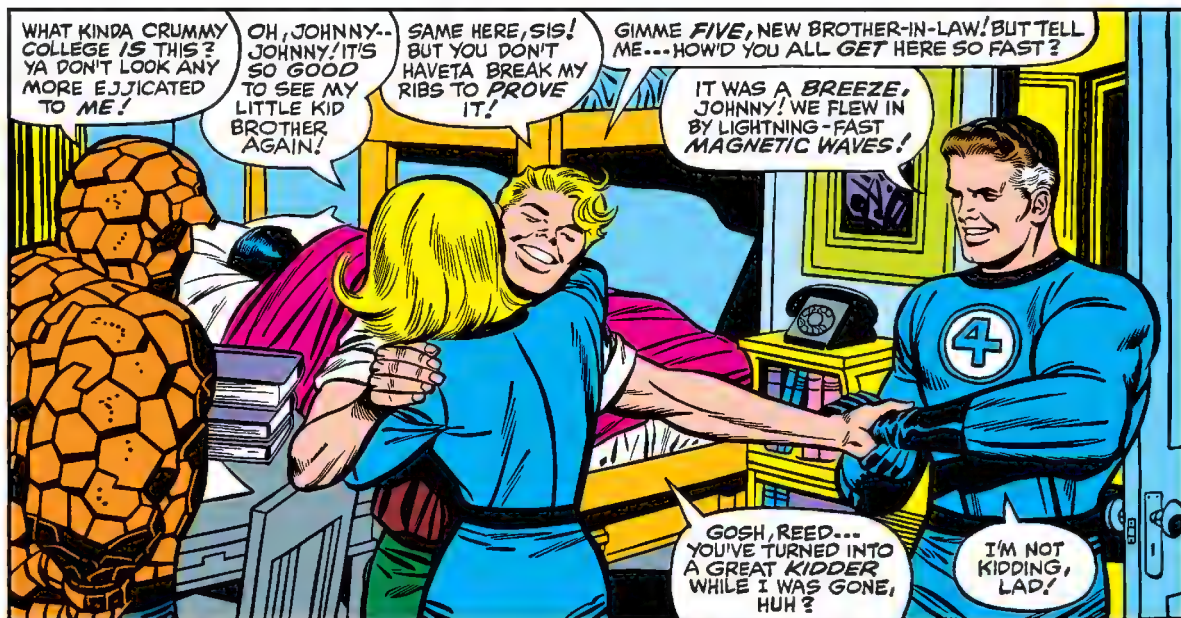
SURPRISE!

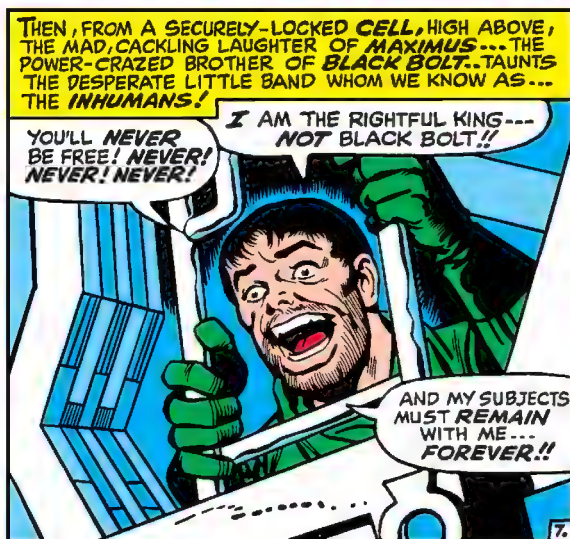
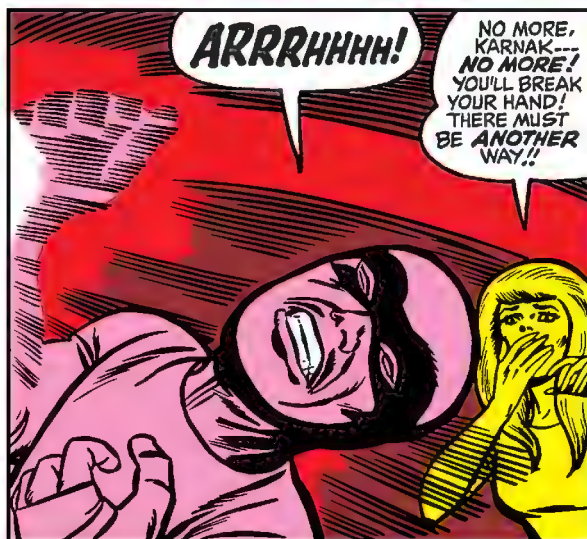
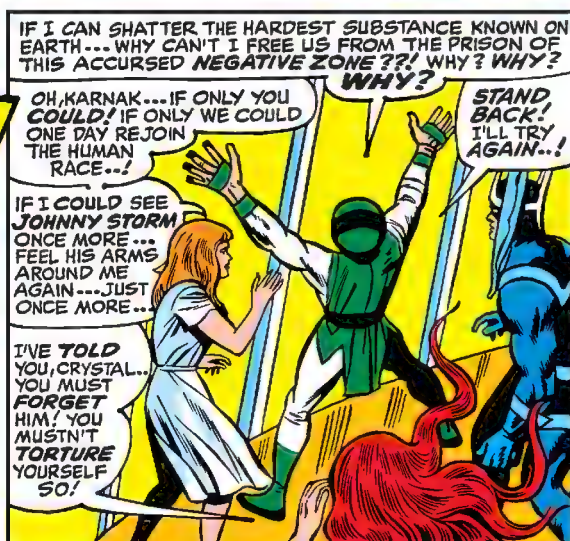
HIYA, JOE COLLEGE! WHAT'S THE GOOD WORD, LITTLE ITTY BITTY BUDDY?

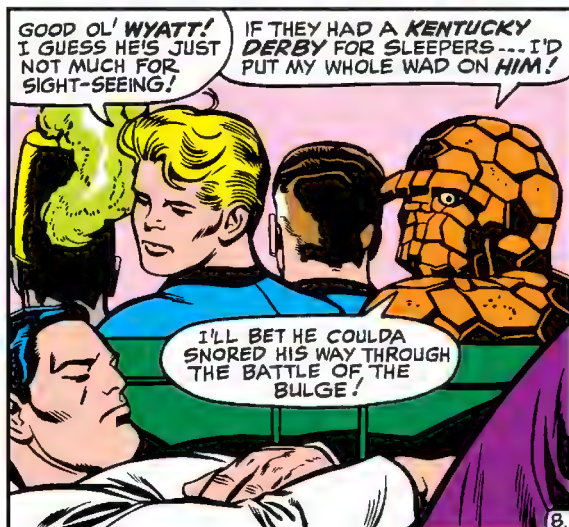
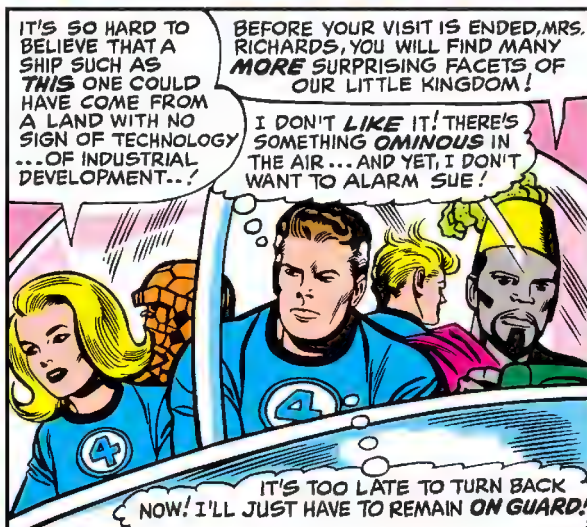
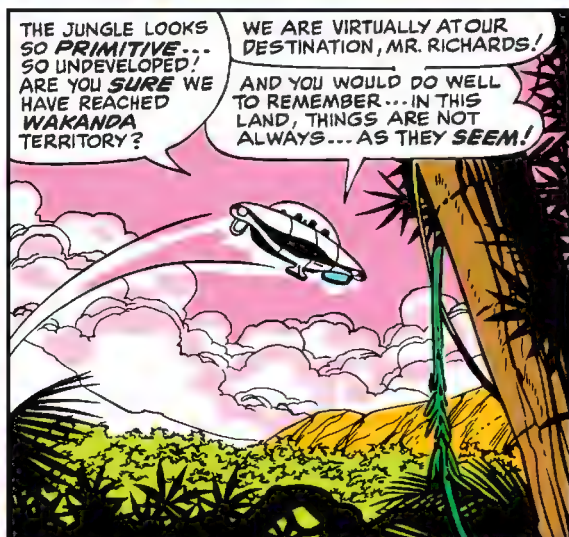
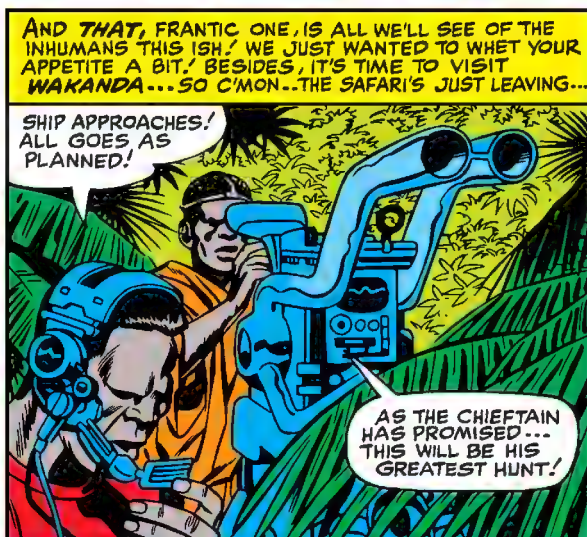
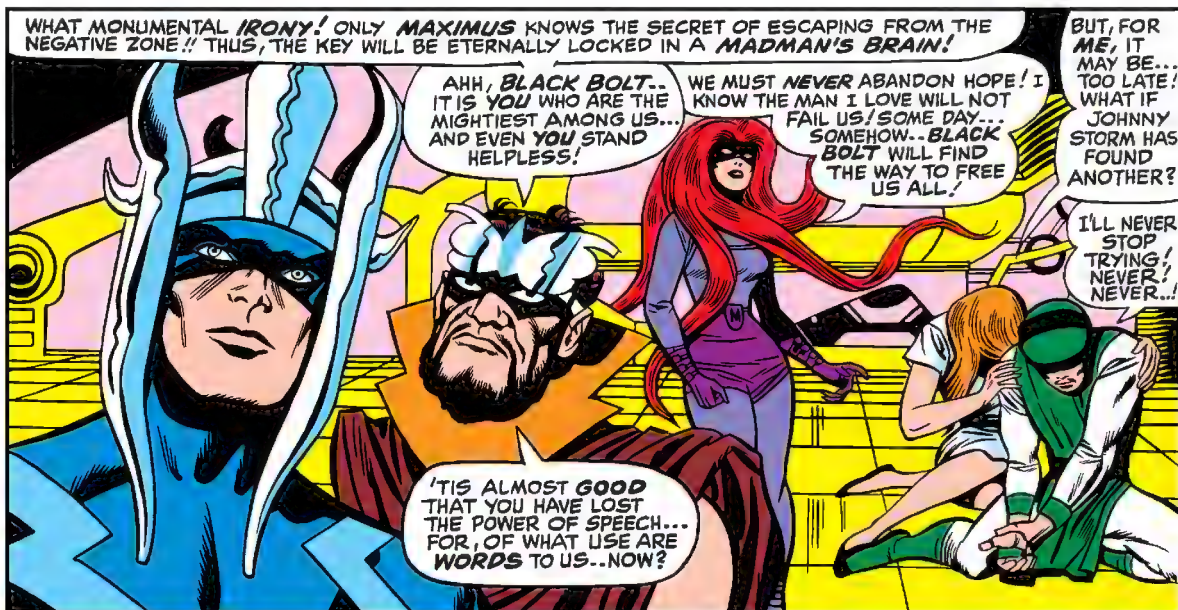
I'LL ITTY BITTY BUDDY YOU, YOU BLUE-EYED BIRDBRAIN!!

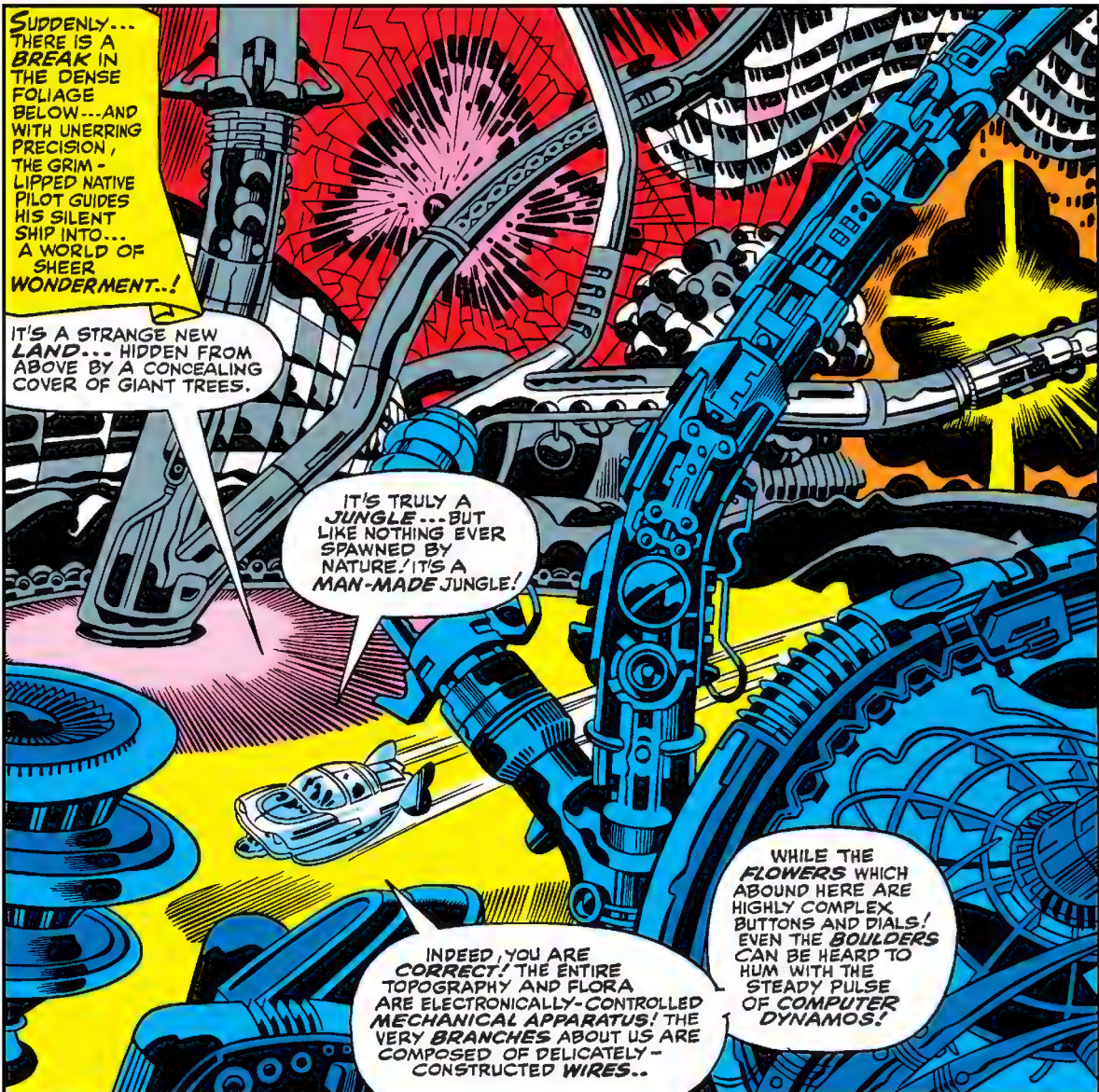
I **KNEW** YAD' BE AS GOOD-NATURED AS EVER, JUNIOR!

LEGGO, BEFORE I GIVE YOU A HOT-FOOT BETWEEN WHERE YOUR EARS OUGHTTA BE!









SUDDENLY...
THERE IS A
BREAK IN THE
DENSE
FOLIAGE
BELOW...AND
WITH UNERRING
PRECISION,
THE GRIM-
LIPPED NATIVE
PILOT GUIDES
HIS SILENT
SHIP INTO...
A WORLD OF
SHEER
WONDERMENT..!

IT'S A STRANGE NEW
LAND... HIDDEN FROM
ABOVE BY A CONCEALING
COVER OF GIANT TREES.

IT'S TRULY A
JUNGLE... BUT
LIKE NOTHING EVER
SPAWNED BY
NATURE, IT'S A
MAN-MADE JUNGLE!

INDEED, YOU ARE
CORRECT! THE ENTIRE
TOPOGRAPHY AND FLORA
ARE ELECTRONICALLY-CONTROLLED
MECHANICAL APPARATUS! THE
VERY **BRANCHES** ABOUT US ARE
COMPOSED OF DELICATELY-
CONSTRUCTED WIRES..

WHILE THE
FLOWERS WHICH
ABOUND HERE ARE
HIGHLY COMPLEX
BUTTONS AND DIALS!
EVEN THE **BOULDERS**
CAN BE HEARD TO
HUM WITH THE
STEADY PULSE
OF **COMPUTER
DYNAMOS!**

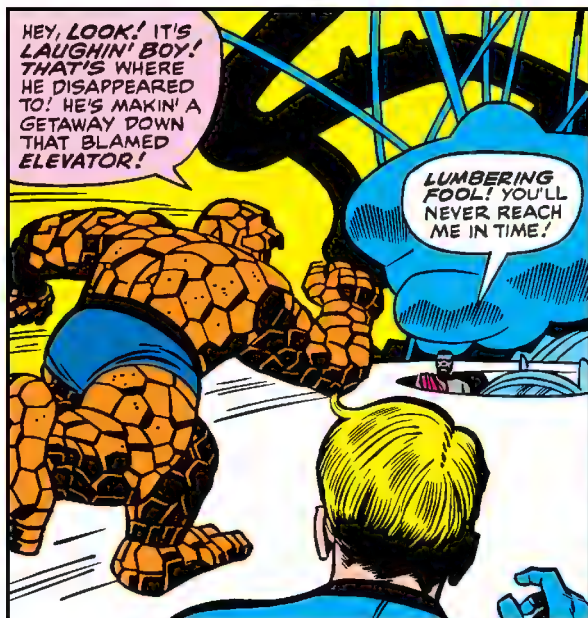


THEN, NO SOONER DOES THE AMAZING SHIP COME TO A VIBRATIONLESS HALT, THAN...

OUR GUIDE!! HE'S GONE!
HE VANISHED BEHIND A
NETWORK OF TUBES AND
COILS!

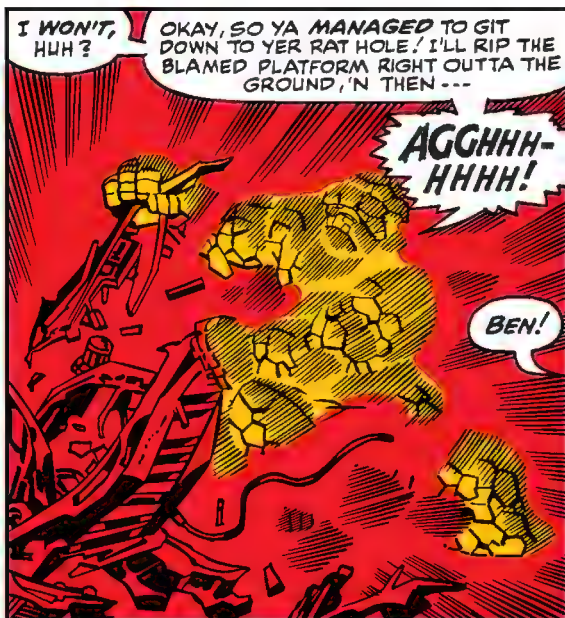
STAY TOGETHER... ALL OF YOU! WHOEVER
CREATED THIS ELECTRONIC NIGHTMARE HAS
KEPT IT A **SECRET** FOR SOME **DEADLY
REASON!**

PHOOEY! IT'LL TAKE
MORE'N A MESS'A
CHROME-PLATED NUTS
'N BOLTS TO SCARE
ME!



HEY, LOOK! IT'S LAUGHIN' BOY! THAT'S WHERE HE DISAPPEARED TO! HE'S MAKIN' A GETAWAY DOWN THAT BLAMED ELEVATOR!

LUMBERING FOOL! YOU'LL NEVER REACH ME IN TIME!

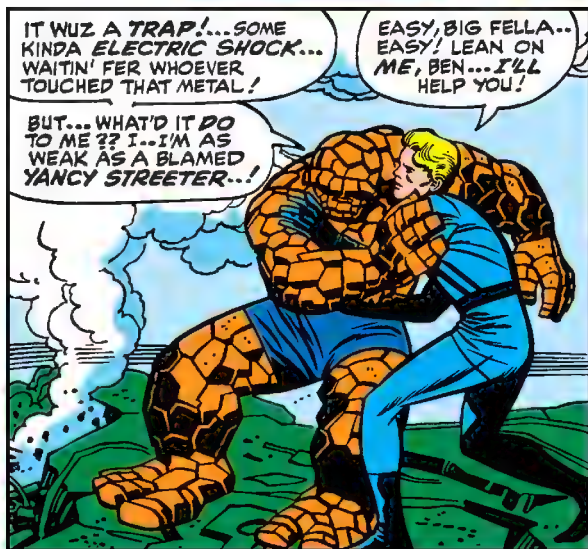


I WON'T, HUH?

OKAY, SO YA MANAGED TO GIT DOWN TO YER RAT HOLE! I'LL RIP THE BLAMED PLATFORM RIGHT OUTTA THE GROUND, 'N THEN ---

AGGHHH-HHHH!

BEN!



IT WUZ A TRAP!... SOME KINDA ELECTRIC SHOCK... WAITIN' FER WHOEVER TOUCHED THAT METAL!

EASY, BIG FELLA... EASY! LEAN ON ME, BEN... I'LL HELP YOU!

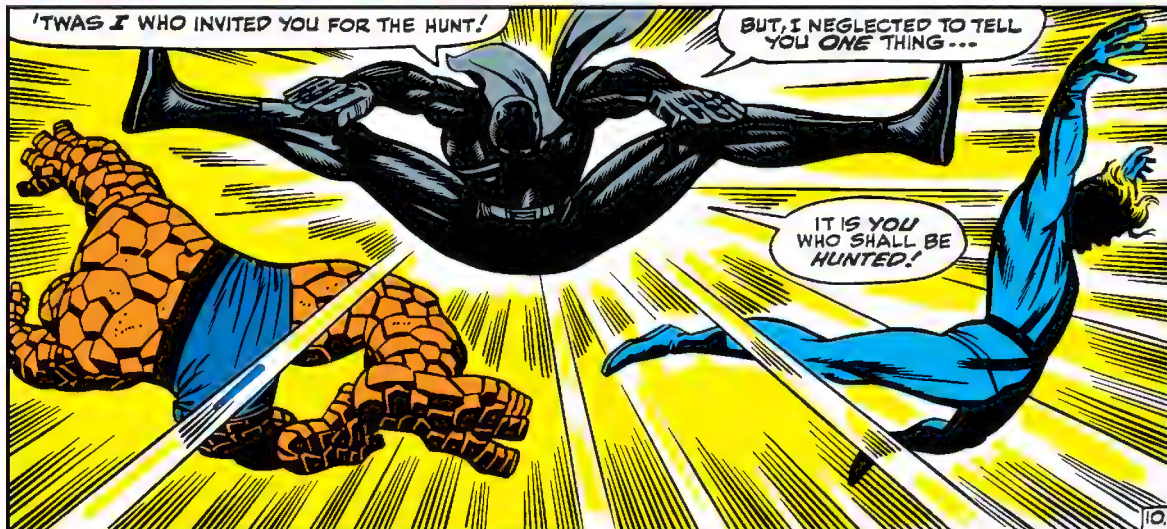
BUT... WHAT'D IT DO TO ME ?? I..I'M AS WEAK AS A BLAMED YANCY STREETER...!



YOU WASTE YOUR TIME, JOHNNY STORM! NOTHING CAN HELP ANY OF YOU NOW!

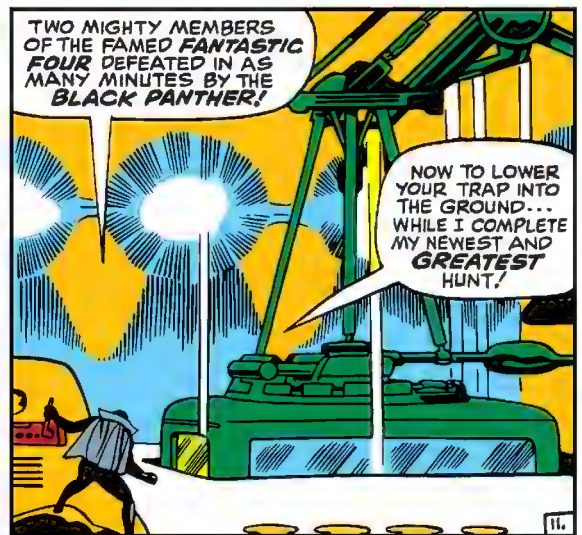
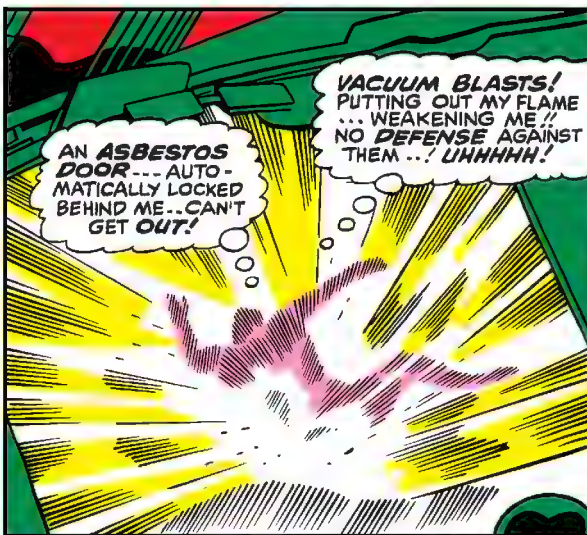
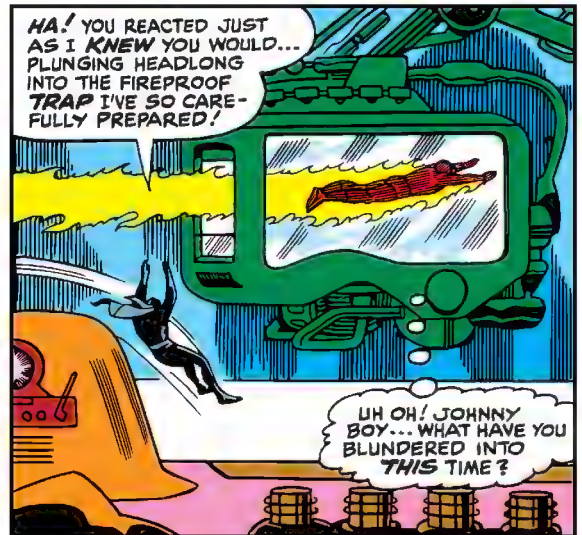
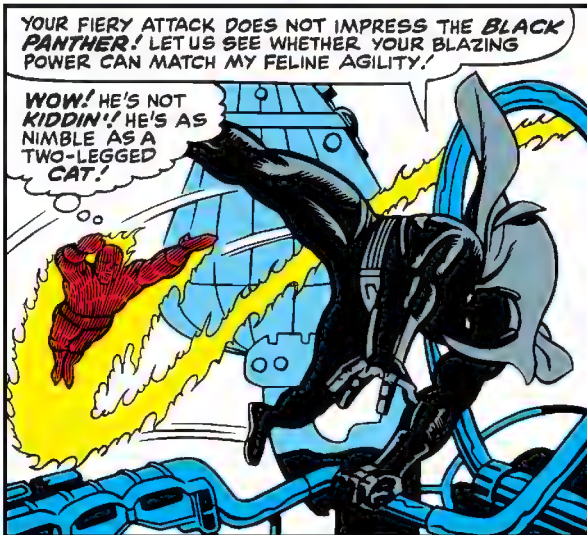
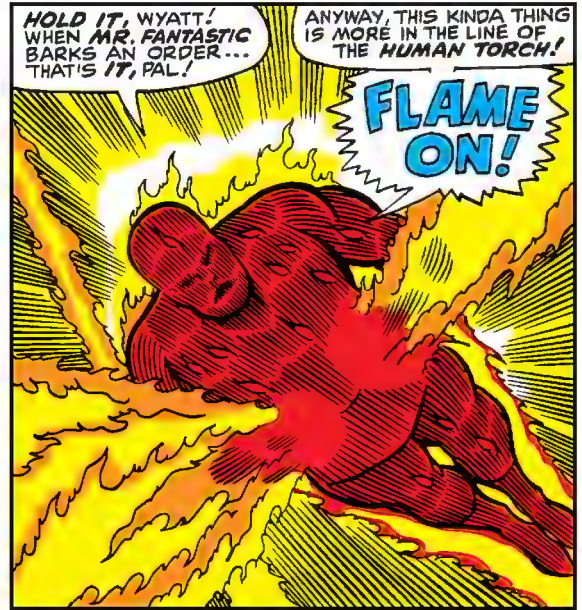
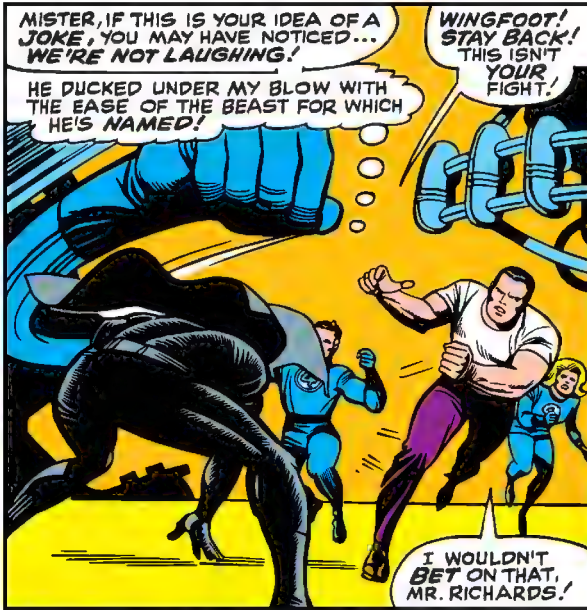
THOSE ELECTRIC VOLTS HAVE CAUSED A CHAIN REACTION IN HIS BLOOD CELLS WHICH WILL WEAKEN HIM FOR FIVE MINUTES!

AND THAT IS ALL THE TIME THE BLACK PANTHER SHALL NEED!



BUT, I NEGLECTED TO TELL YOU ONE THING...

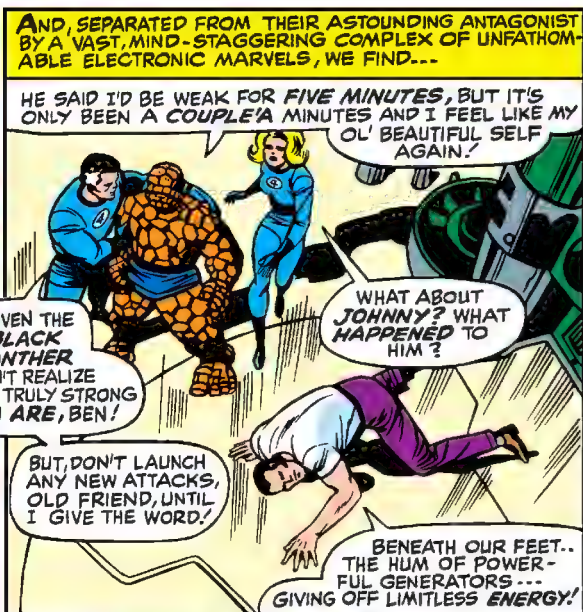
IT IS YOU WHO SHALL BE HUNTED!





AHH...MY PREY LEARNS **QUICKLY!** THEY HAVE ELECTED TO STOP AND **PLAN** BEFORE PLUNGING WITLESSLY INTO ANOTHER FOOL-HARDY ATTACK!

THAT IS **GOOD!** A VICTORY TOO EASILY WON IS TOO SOON **FORGOTTEN!**



AND, SEPARATED FROM THEIR ASTOUNDING ANTAGONIST BY A VAST, MIND-STAGGERING COMPLEX OF UNFATHOMABLE ELECTRONIC MARVELS, WE FIND...

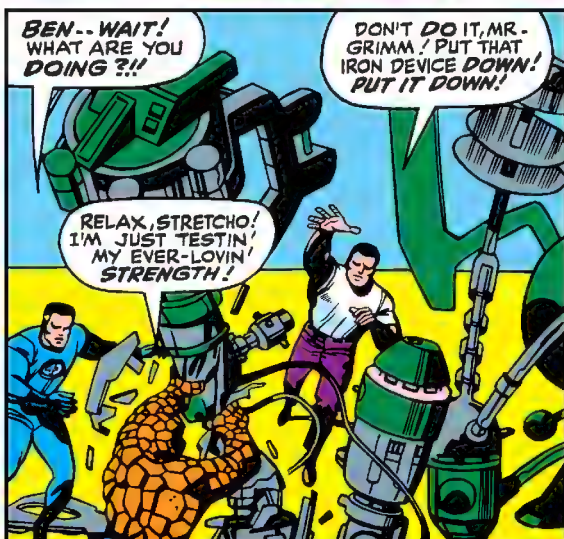
HE SAID I'D BE WEAK FOR **FIVE MINUTES**, BUT IT'S ONLY BEEN A **COUPLE'A MINUTES** AND I FEEL LIKE MY OL' BEAUTIFUL SELF AGAIN!

EVEN THE **BLACK PANTHER** DIDN'T REALIZE HOW TRULY STRONG YOU ARE, BEN!

BUT, DON'T LAUNCH ANY NEW ATTACKS, OLD FRIEND, UNTIL I GIVE THE WORD!

WHAT ABOUT **JOHNNY**? WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

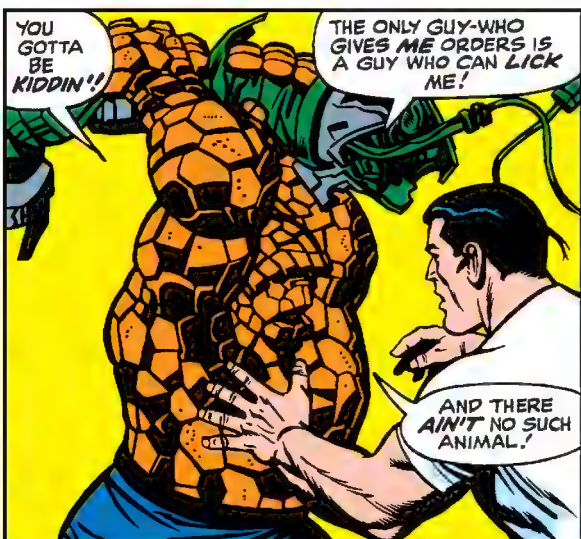
BENEATH OUR FEET.. THE HUM OF POWERFUL GENERATORS... GIVING OFF LIMITLESS **ENERGY!**



BEN-- WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING **??!**

DON'T DO IT, MR. GRIMM! PUT THAT IRON DEVICE **DOWN!** PUT IT **DOWN!**

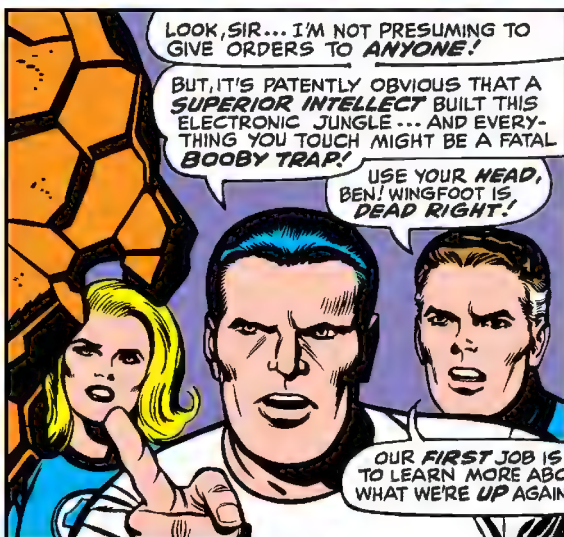
RELAX, **STRETCHO!** I'M JUST TESTIN' MY EVER-LOVIN' **STRENGTH!**



YOU GOTTA BE **KIDDIN'!!**

THE ONLY GUY-WHO GIVES ME ORDERS IS A GUY WHO CAN **LICK ME!**

AND THERE **AIN'T** NO SUCH ANIMAL!

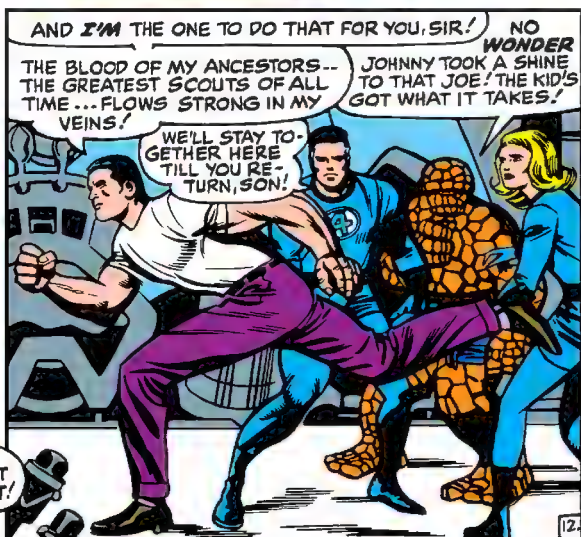


LOOK, SIR... I'M NOT PRESUMING TO GIVE ORDERS TO **ANYONE!**

BUT, IT'S PATENTLY OBVIOUS THAT A **SUPERIOR INTELLECT** BUILT THIS ELECTRONIC JUNGLE... AND EVERYTHING YOU TOUCH MIGHT BE A FATAL **BOOBY TRAP!**

USE YOUR **HEAD**, BEN! WINGFOOT IS **DEAD RIGHT!**

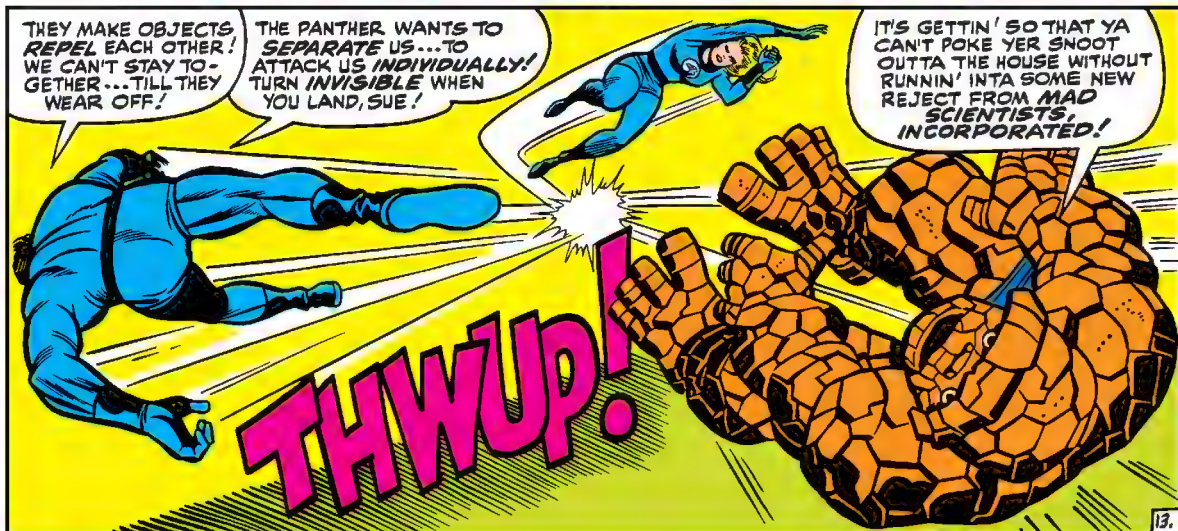
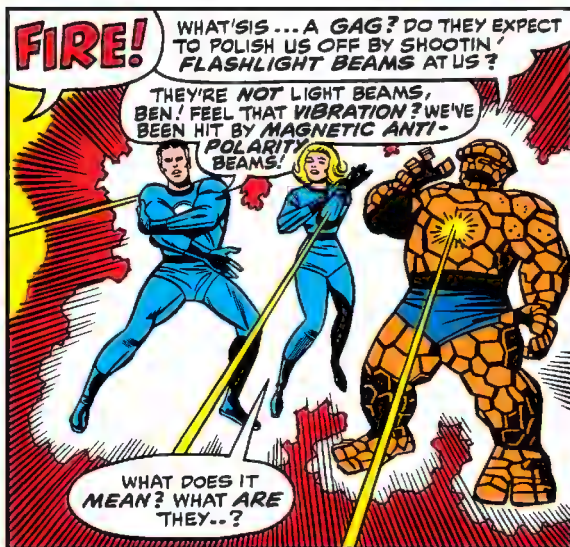
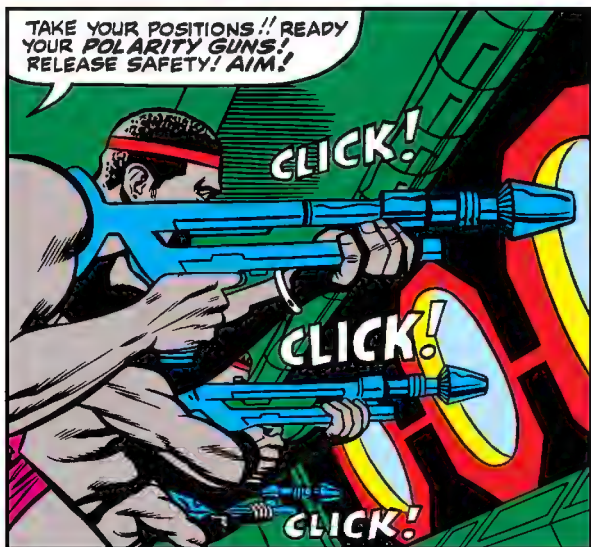
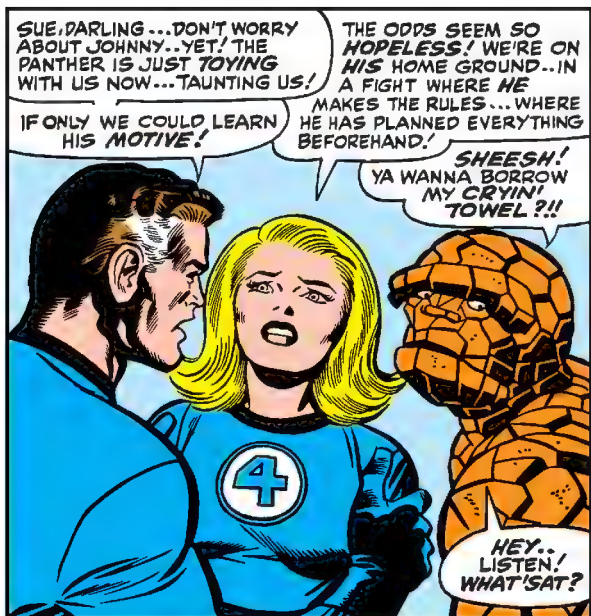
OUR **FIRST JOB** IS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST!

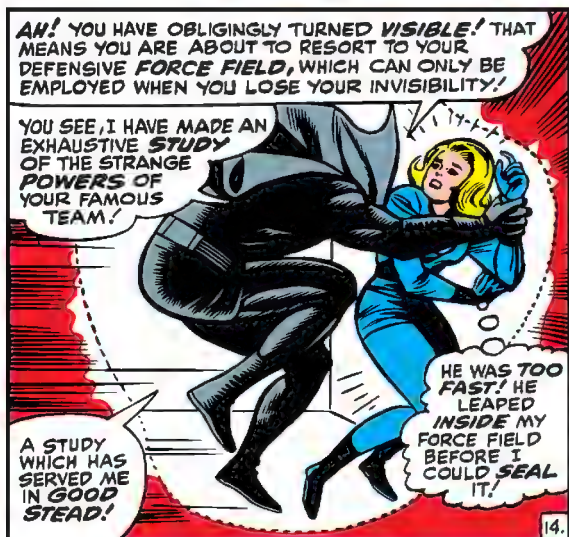
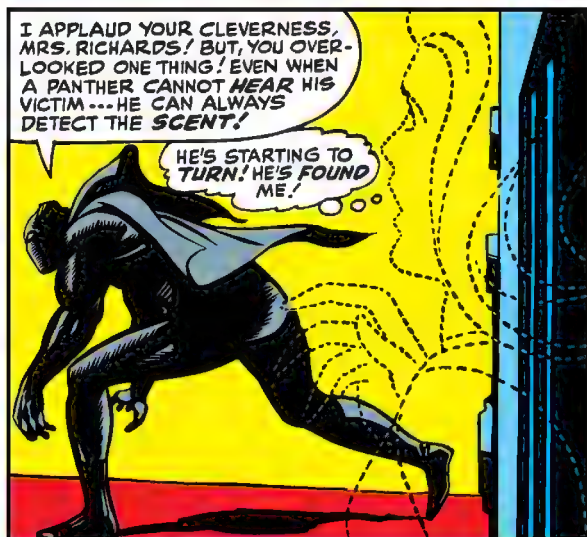
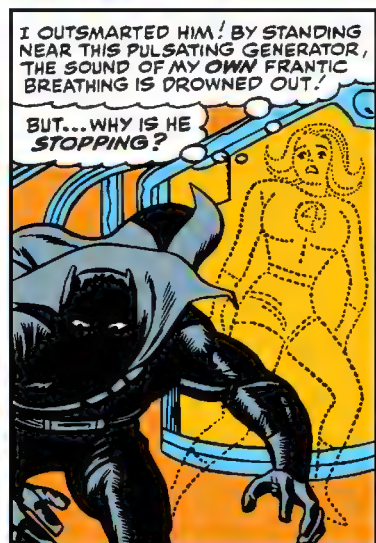
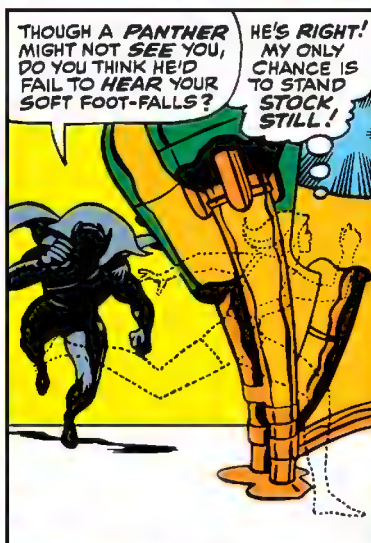
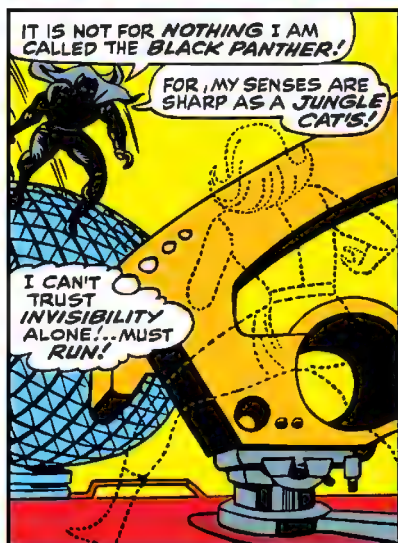
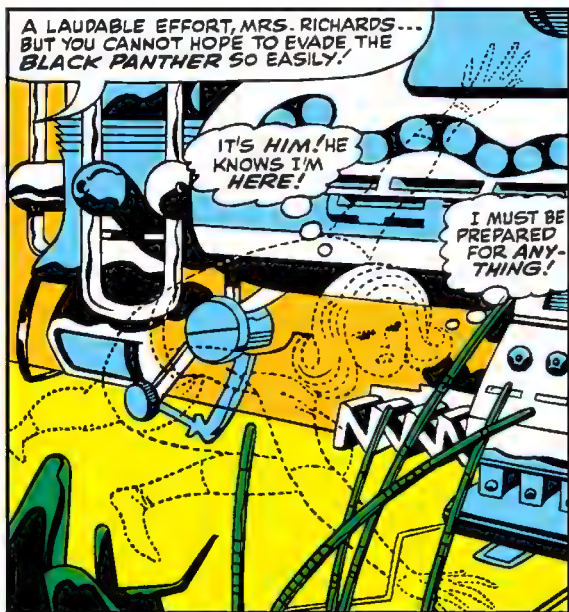


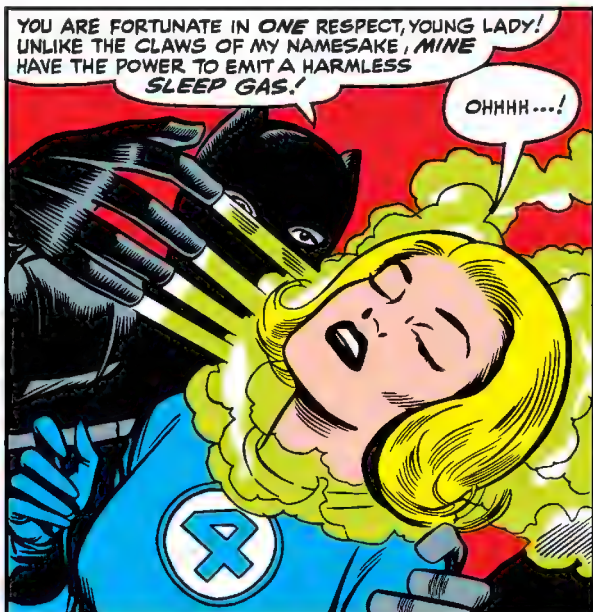
AND **I'M** THE ONE TO DO THAT FOR YOU, SIR! NO **WONDER** THE BLOOD OF MY ANCESTORS-- THE GREATEST SCOUTS OF ALL TIME... FLOWS STRONG IN MY **VEINS!**

JOHNNY TOOK A SHINE TO THAT JOE! THE KID'S GOT WHAT IT TAKES!

WE'LL STAY TOGETHER HERE TILL YOU'RE **TURN, SON!**

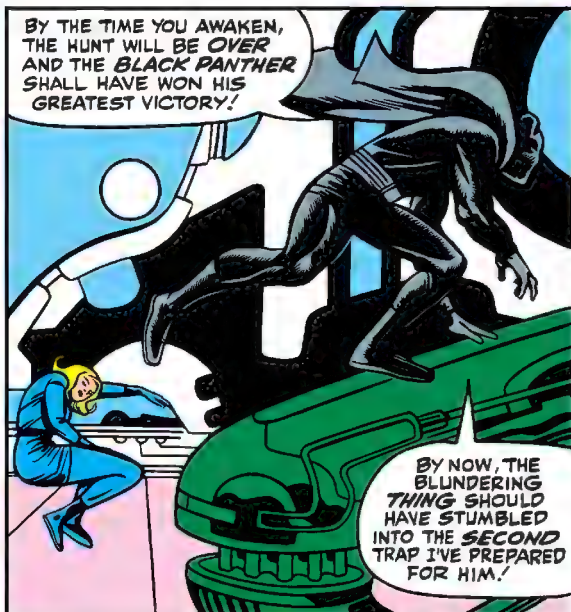






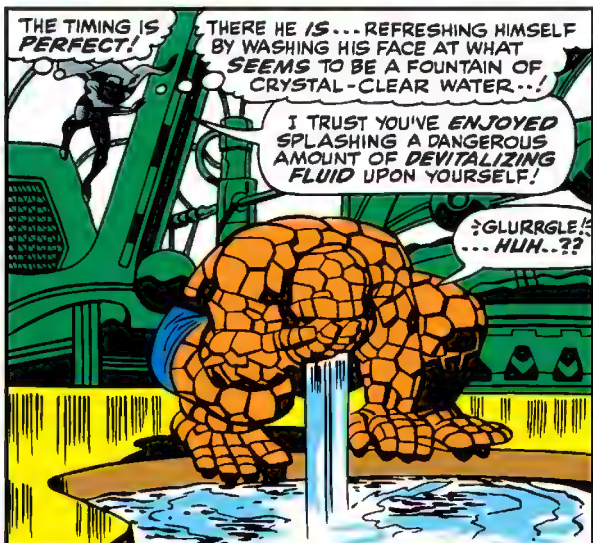
YOU ARE FORTUNATE IN *ONE* RESPECT, YOUNG LADY! UNLIKE THE CLAWS OF MY NAMESAKE, *MINE* HAVE THE POWER TO EMIT A HARMLESS *SLEEP GAS!*

OHhhh...!



BY THE TIME YOU AWAKEN, THE HUNT WILL BE OVER AND THE *BLACK PANTHER* SHALL HAVE WON HIS GREATEST VICTORY!

BY NOW, THE BLUNDERING THING SHOULD HAVE STUMBLER INTO THE *SECOND* TRAP I'VE PREPARED FOR HIM!

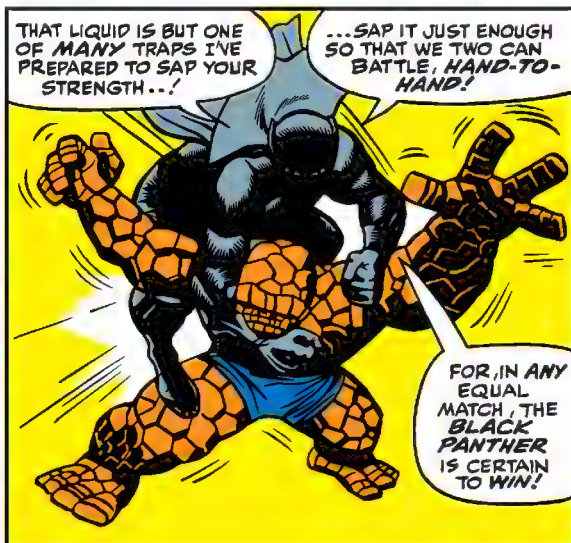


THE TIMING IS *PERFECT!*

THERE HE IS... REFRESHING HIMSELF BY WASHING HIS FACE AT WHAT SEEMS TO BE A FOUNTAIN OF CRYSTAL-CLEAR WATER...!

I TRUST YOU'VE ENJOYED SPLASHING A DANGEROUS AMOUNT OF DEVITALIZING FLUID UPON YOURSELF!

?GLURGLE!
...HUH...??



THAT LIQUID IS BUT ONE OF *MANY* TRAPS I'VE PREPARED TO SAP YOUR STRENGTH...!

...SAP IT JUST ENOUGH SO THAT WE TWO CAN BATTLE, *HAND-TO-HAND!*

FOR, IN ANY EQUAL MATCH, THE *BLACK PANTHER* IS CERTAIN TO WIN!



SAY, YOU 'N RICHARDS DIDN'T GO TO THE SAME *PREP SCHOOL* OR SOMETHIN', DIDJA?

IT'S MOST UNLIKELY! ... WHY?

YA BOTH GOT THE SAME CORN-BALL HABIT...



...YA CAN *TALK* A GUY TO DEATH WHILE YER *FIGHTIN'* 'IM!

PERHAPS, BUT I CAN DO FAR *MORE* THAN TALK..

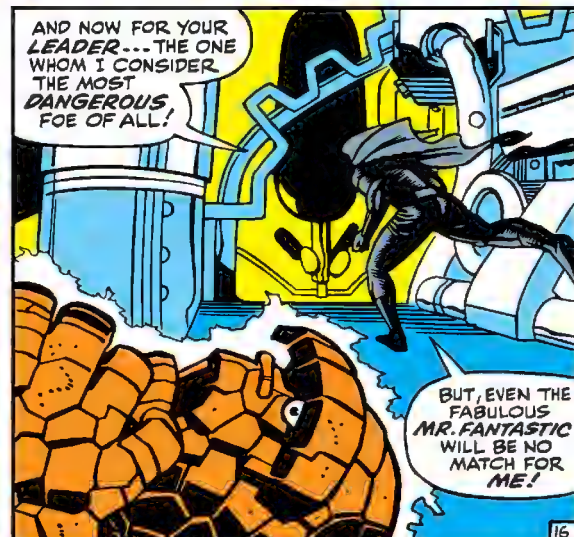
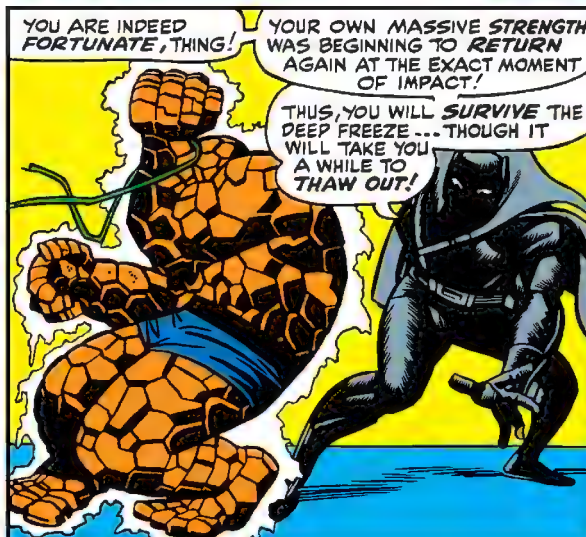
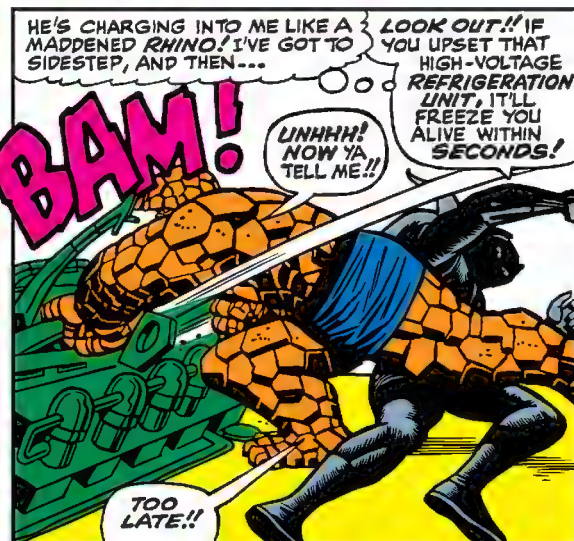
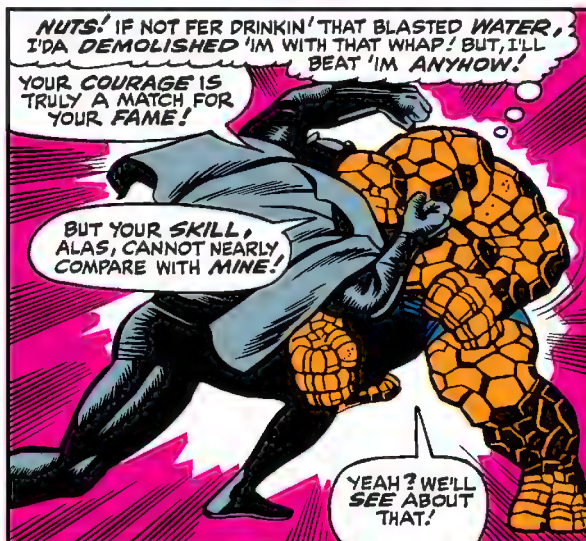
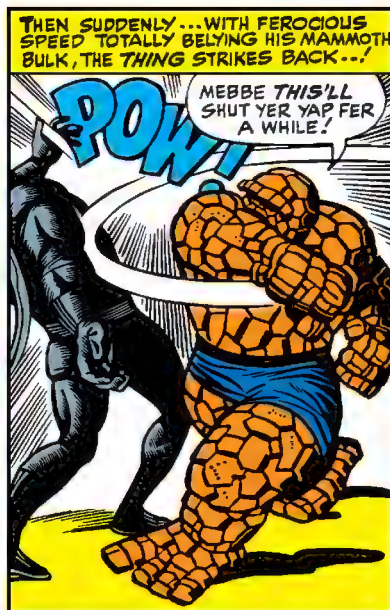
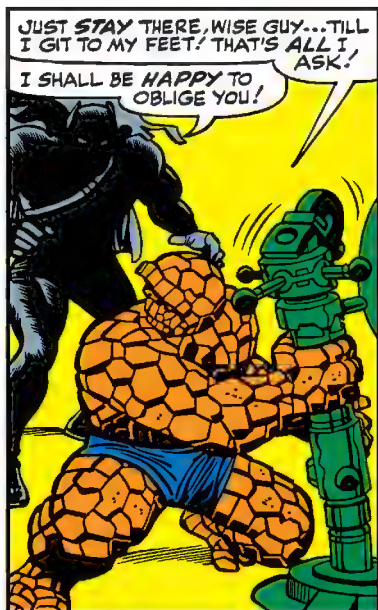
...AS YOU SHALL SEE...!



AMONG OTHER THINGS, I HAVE LONG BEEN THE *BOXING CHAMPION* OF THIS ENTIRE CONTINENT!

WOK!

WELL GOODY FER YOU!...SURPPP!?



MEANWHILE, WHAT OF **WYATT WINGFOOT**? (...WE THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!)

SO! THE EDGE OF THE REAL JUNGLE, AT LAST! BUT, WHAT'S THIS?

A HIDDEN OBSERVATION POST... THE WAKANDAS HAVE BEEN SECRETLY MONITORING THE F.F.!

OUR CHIEFTAIN MUST DEFEAT ONLY ONE MORE TO ACHIEVE HIS GOAL OF TOTAL VICTORY!

THE BLACK PANTHER SHALL NOT FAIL!

BUT THEN, WITH THE STEALTHY SILENCE OF HIS PROUD, RED-SKINNED FOREBARS, THE INDIAN YOUTH STRIKES!

IF I CAN CRIPPLE THE BLACK PANTHER'S COMMUNICATIONS, IT MAY HELP THE F.F.!

BAM!

LUCKY FOR ME THEY WEREN'T EXPECTING AN ATTACK! NOW IF THEY'LL JUST STAY OUT LONG ENOUGH...

THERE! THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO SPY ON ANYONE ELSE WITH THESE ELECTRONIC SCANNERS!

AND NOW, I'D BETTER GET BACK TO THE OTHERS... WHILE I STILL CAN!

KRAK!

I'VE GOT TO FIND THEM AGAIN, AND LEAD THEM OUT OF THIS ARTIFICIAL JUNGLE INTO THE REAL ONE!

SO LONG AS THEY'RE SURROUNDED BY ALL OF THE BLACK PANTHER'S ELABORATE TRAPS, THE ODDS MUST BE AGAINST THEM!

BUT, MINUTES LATER, AS THE COURAGEOUS YOUTH REACHES HIS DESTINATION...

I'M TOO LATE!! THEY'RE GONE!

WAIT...WHAT'S THIS? THE GROUND...IT FEELS WARM!

IS THERE SOME SORT OF DYNAMO BENEATH ME, OR...CAN IT BE...?!!

THE INTENSITY OF THE HEAT KEEPS VARYING! THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE EXPLANATION...

IT'S THE TORCH! HE'S TRAPPED BENEATH ME... AND HE'S TRYING TO SIGNAL...TO CATCH MY ATTENTION!

NO MATTER WHAT...I MUSTN'T FAIL HIM!



IF YOU CAN KEEP TRACK OF WHERE WE LEAVE EVERYONE DURING THESE STACCATO SCENE CHANGES, YOU'RE BETTER THAN WE ARE, FRANTIC ONE!— ANYWAY...

ONCE I HAVE BESTED YOU, RICHARDS, THE HUNT WILL BE ENDED!

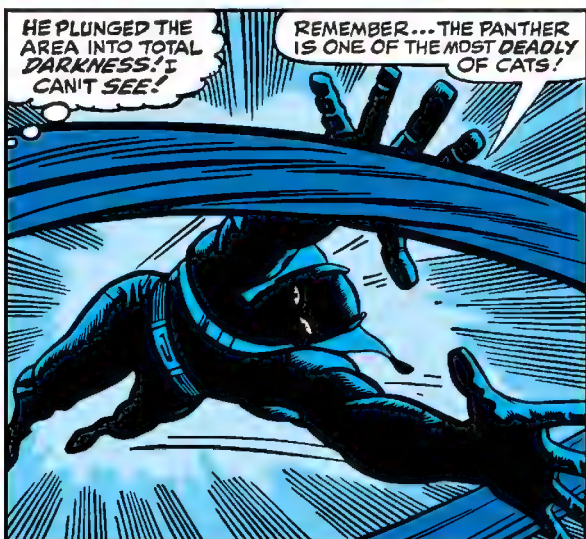
MY WIFE!! WHERE IS SHE? IF YOU'VE HARMED HER...

SHE IS SAFE ENOUGH... FOR NOW! I DO NOT CONSIDER FEMALES TO BE FAIR GAME!



HE'S POISED TO LEAP! IF I CAN LASSO HIM FIRST...

I CAN DIVINE YOUR PURPOSE... BUT YOU WILL FIND THAT I AM NOT SO EASILY OUT-MANEUVORED!



HE PLUNGED THE AREA INTO TOTAL DARKNESS! I CAN'T SEE!

REMEMBER... THE PANTHER IS ONE OF THE MOST DEADLY OF CATS!

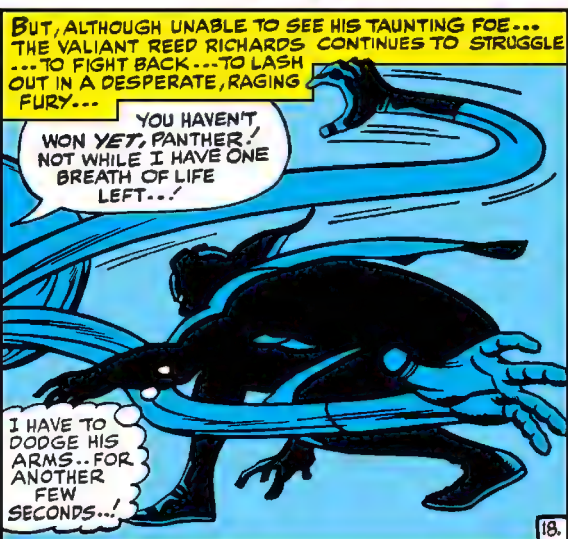


AND, UNLIKE A MERE HUMAN, THE CAT IS NEVER SIGHTLESS IN THE DARK!

UHHHH...



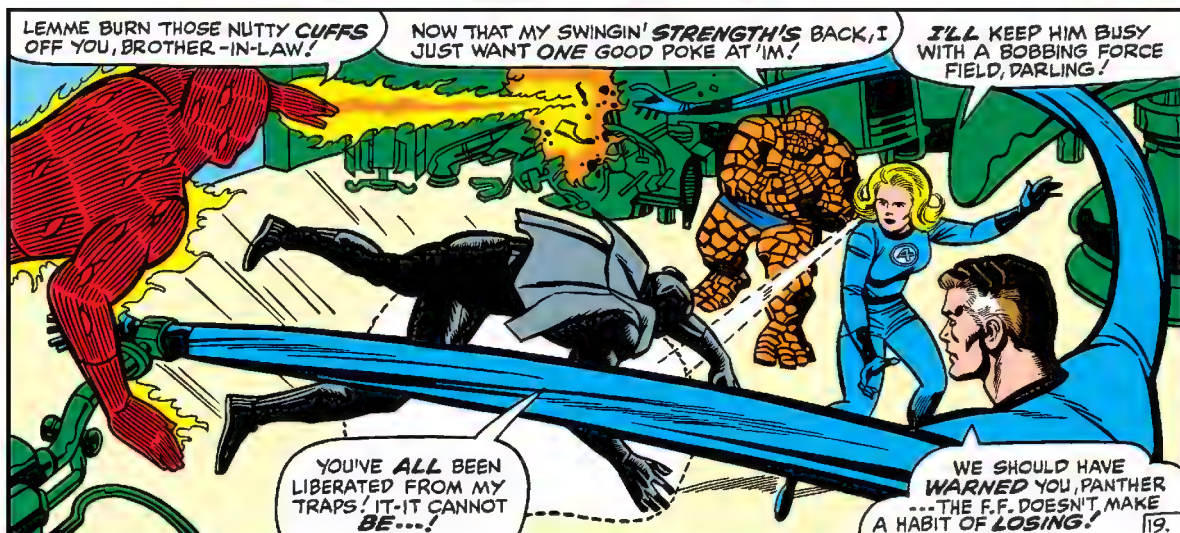
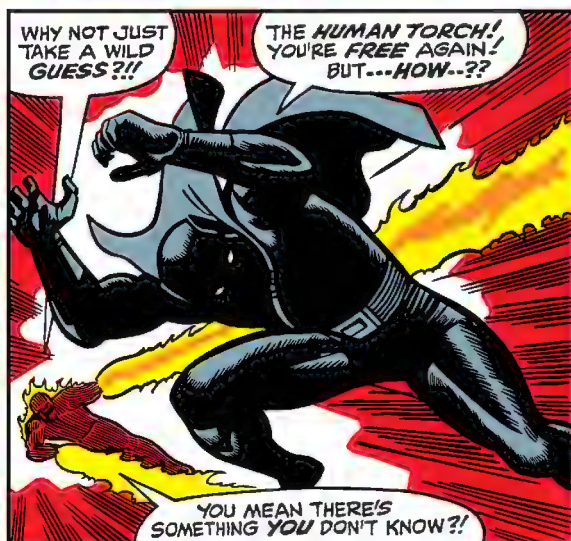
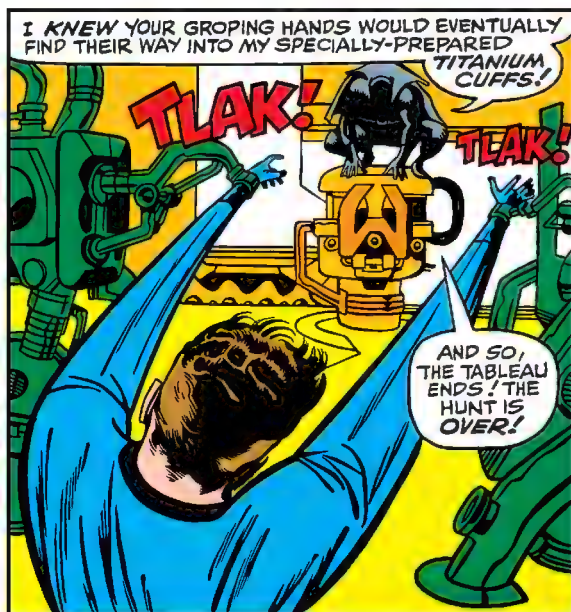
MR. FANTASTIC... LEADER OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR... HELPLESS BEFORE THE POWER OF THE BLACK PANTHER! MY HOUR OF TRIUMPH AT LAST!

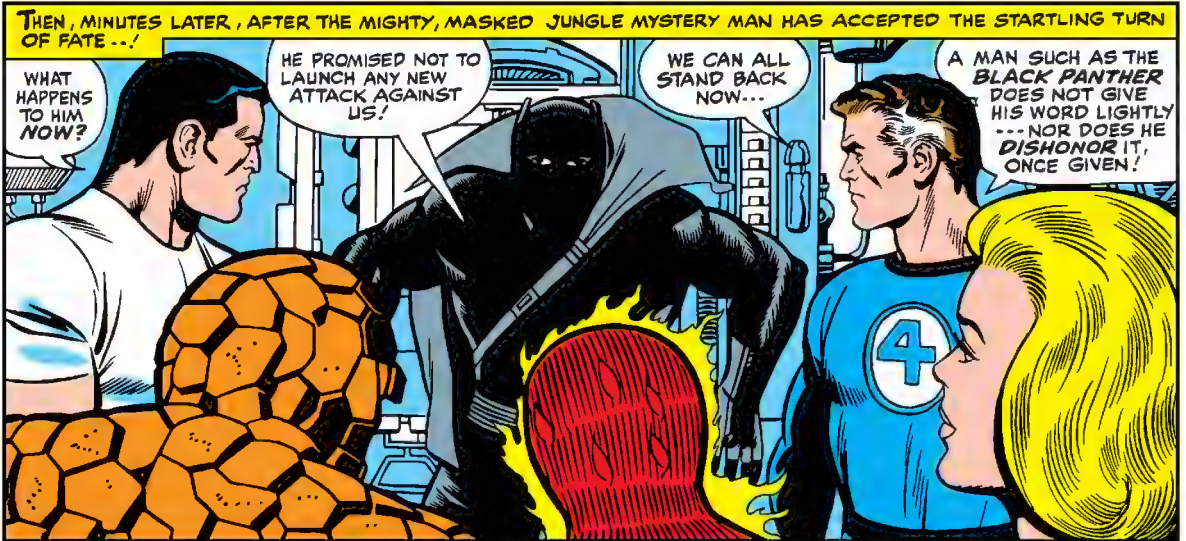


BUT, ALTHOUGH UNABLE TO SEE HIS TAUNTING FOE... THE VALIANT REED RICHARDS CONTINUES TO STRUGGLE... TO FIGHT BACK... TO LASH OUT IN A DESPERATE, RAGING FURY...

YOU HAVEN'T WON YET, PANTHER! NOT WHILE I HAVE ONE BREATH OF LIFE LEFT...

I HAVE TO DODGE HIS ARMS... FOR ANOTHER FEW SECONDS...







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53
AUG

THE WAY
IT BEGAN!



THE FABULOUS *F.F.* LEARN THE SECRET OF THE BLACK PANTHER

"THE WAY IT BEGAN!"

HAVING SUCCESSFULLY EVADED ALL THE UNCANNY TRAPS OF THE *BLACK PANTHER*, THE TRIUMPHANT *FANTASTIC FOUR*, ACCOMPANIED BY *WYATT WINGFOOT*, ARE AWARDED A HEROES' CEREMONY---

LET THE
DANCE OF
FRIEND-
SHIP
BEGIN!

SHEESH!
A BUNCH'A
FRED
ASTAIRES
THEY AINT'!

RELAX, BEN!
IT'S BETTER'N
BEING SHOT'N
BY THEM!

THOUGH THE *WAKANDA TRIBE* LIVES IN THE TRADITION OF THEIR FOREFATHERS, THEY POSSESS MODERN, *SUPER-SCIENTIFIC* WONDERS WE CAN ONLY MARVEL AT! THERE'S AN INCREDIBLE MYSTERY HERE--AND ONLY THE *BLACK PANTHER* HIMSELF KNOWS ALL THE ANSWERS!

THEY ARE
NOT THE
ORDINARY
NATIVE TRIBE
THEY SEEM
TO BE!

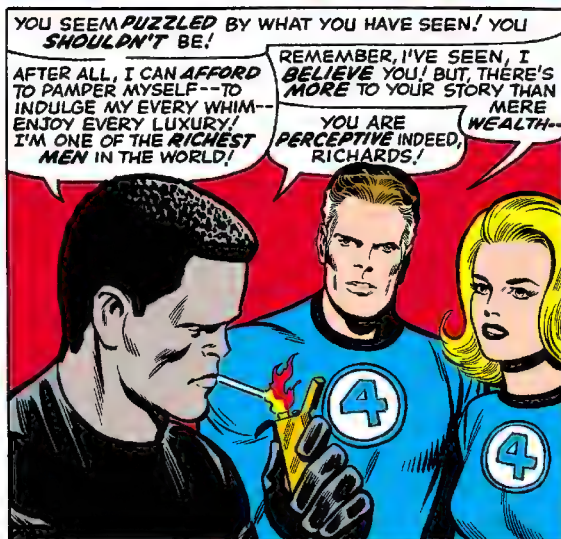
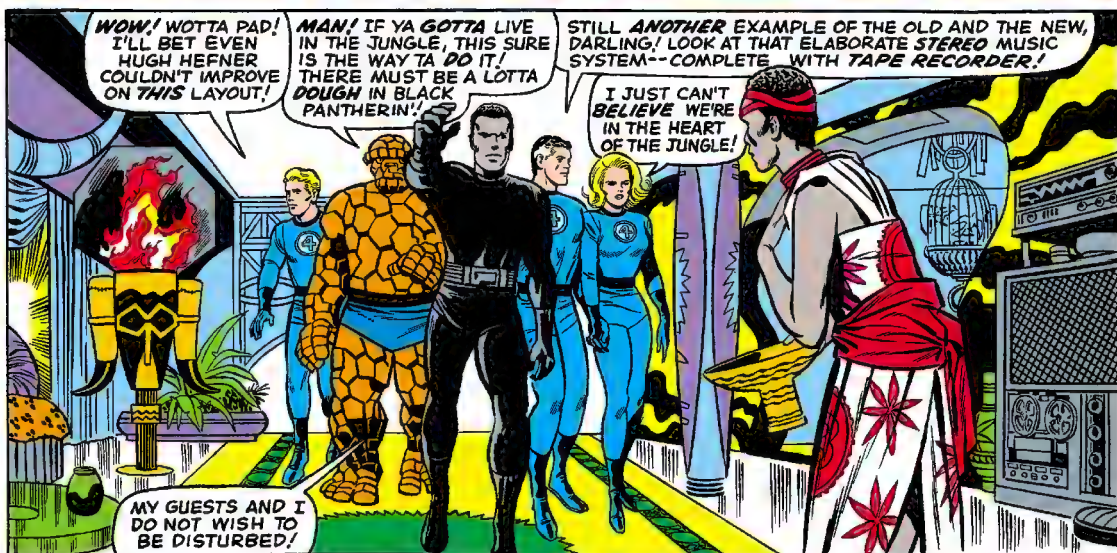
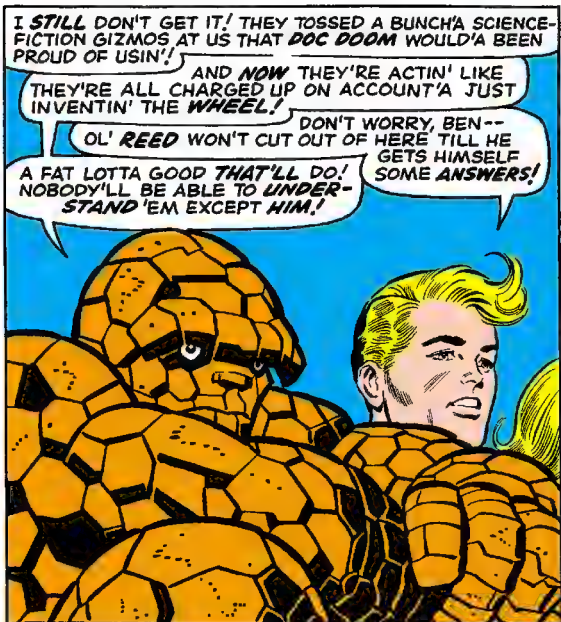
SCRIPT: STAN LEE

ART: JACK KIRBY

INKS: JOE SINNOTT

LETTERING: ARTIE SIMEK

NATIVE DANCES: THE BALLET FORBUSH
TERPSICHOEAN TROUPE



BUT, EVEN AS THE DRAMATIC *BLACK PANTHER* BEGINS HIS REVELATION, TWO MEMBERS OF THE TERRITORIAL PATROL COME UPON A STAGGERING DISCOVERY--

THE ENTIRE AREA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN **RIPPED UP--** AS THOUGH BY GIANT HANDS! THERE ARE NO ANIMALS--NO BIRDS!! EVERY FORM OF LIFE HAS BEEN **FRIGHTENED AWAY!**

AND THESE HOLES IN THE GROUND--IMPOSSIBLE THOUGH IT SEEMS, THEY CAN ONLY BE **TRACKS--** THE FOOTPRINTS OF SOME GARGANTUAN CREATURE!

CAN IT BE THAT THE RUMORS OF MONSTROUS BEASTS ROAMING THE JUNGLE ARE **TRUE?!!**



AT FIRST, I THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST SUPERSTITION--OLD WIVES' TALES TO FRIGHTEN LITTLE CHILDREN! BUT NOW--I CAN ALMOST **SENSE** THE DANGER UPON US!

HOLD IT! DID YOU JUST FEEL THE GROUND TREMBLE--AS THOUGH BENEATH THE PRESSURE OF SOME TITANTIC WEIGHT?!!



THERE! I FELT IT AGAIN!! THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT--SOMETHING IS BEHIND US!

SWIFTLY TURNING, THE TWO MEN RECOIL IN MUTE SHOCK AT THE AWESOME SIGHT THAT GREETS THEIR EYES--AS THEY FIRE WILDLY--DESPERATELY, AT THAT WHICH CONFRONTS THEM--!

IT'S LIKE A GIGANTIC **GORILLA--**AN UNBELIEVABLE CRIMSON ANTHROPOID!!

KEEP FIRING! OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO FRIGHTEN HIM AWAY WITH OUR GUNSHOTS!! IT'S **TOO LATE** TO RUN!

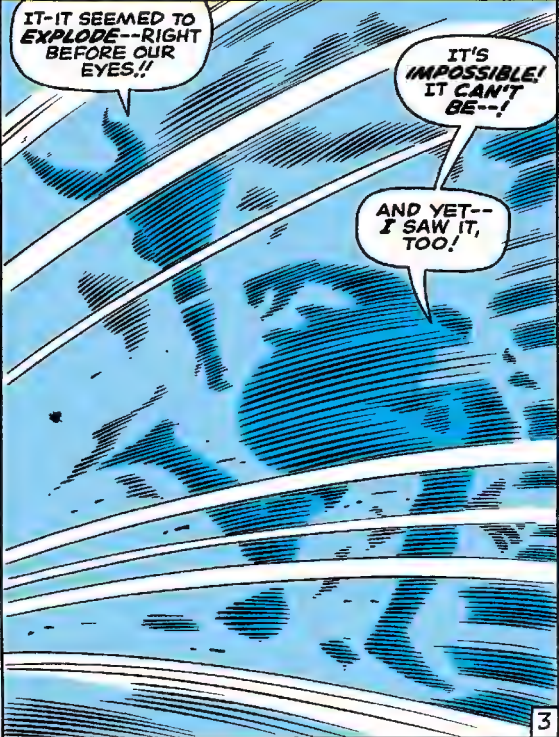


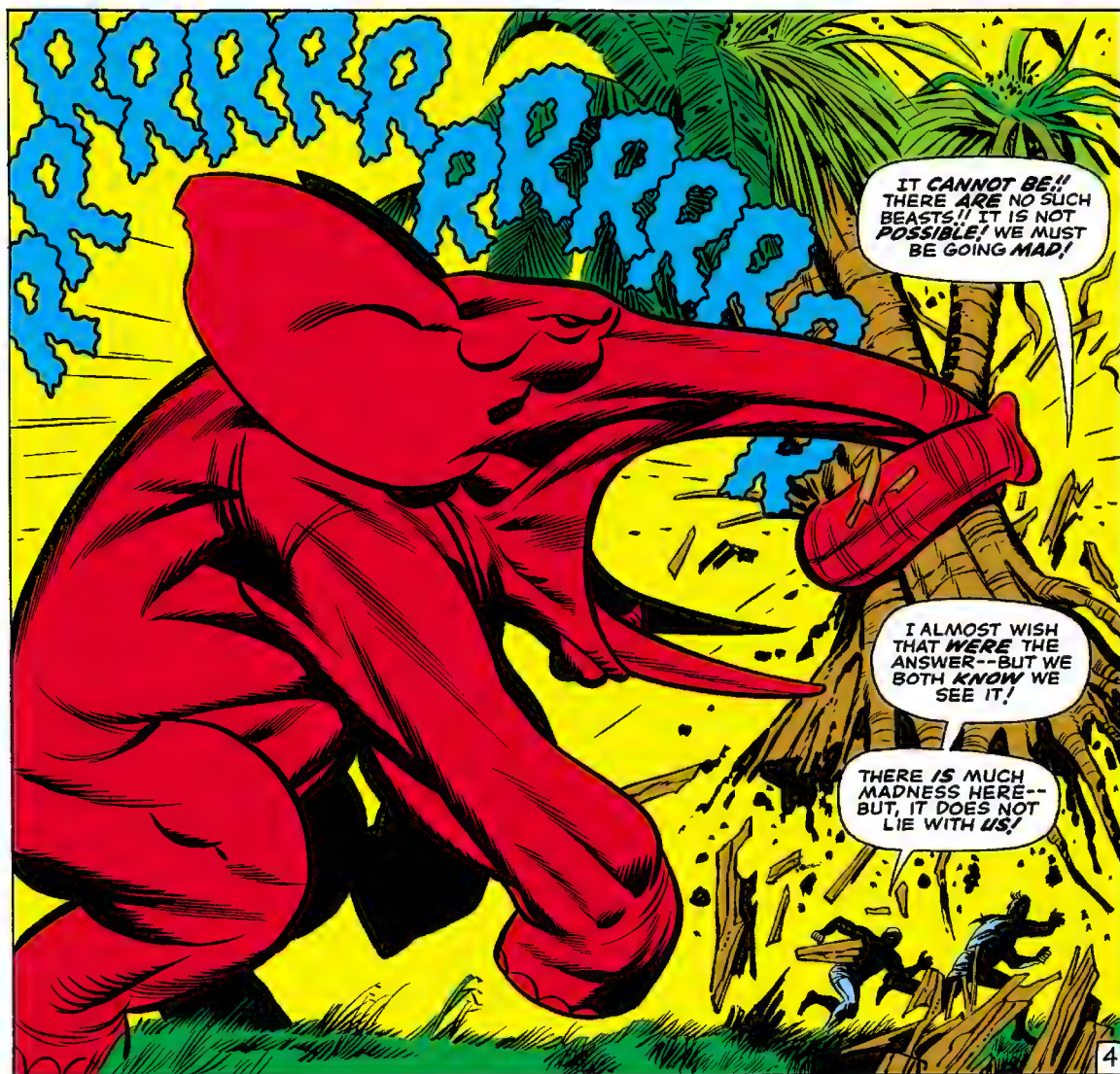
HOWEVER, THE GUNFIRE OF THE TWO COURAGEOUS PATROLMEN CAUSES A PHENOMENON FAR DIFFERENT THAN EITHER OF THEM EXPECTS--!

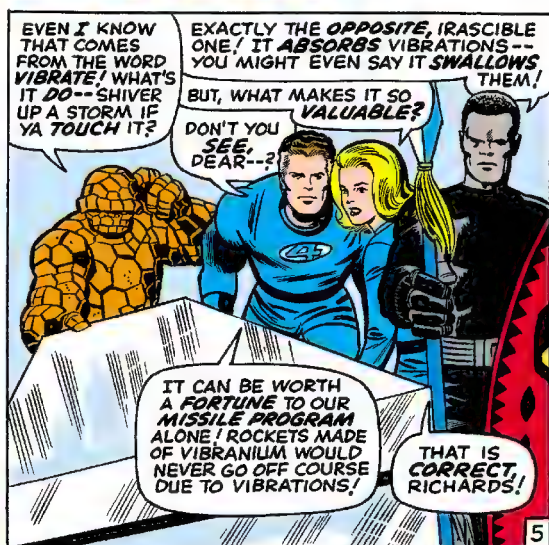
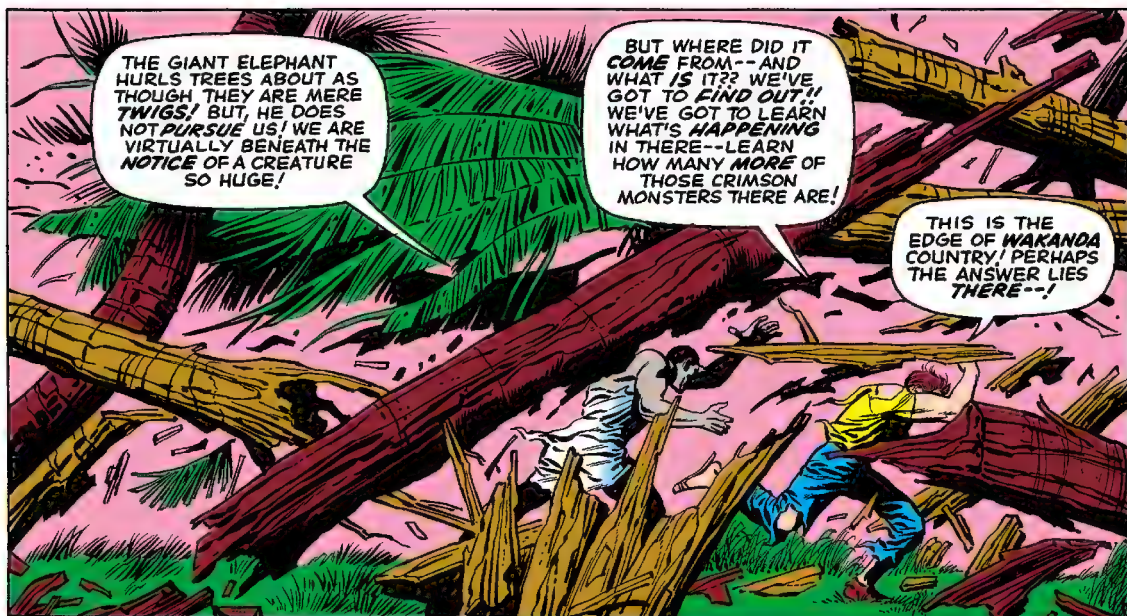
IT--IT SEEMED TO **EXPLODE--**RIGHT BEFORE OUR EYES!!

IT'S **IMPOSSIBLE!** IT CAN'T BE--!

AND YET--I SAW IT, TOO!

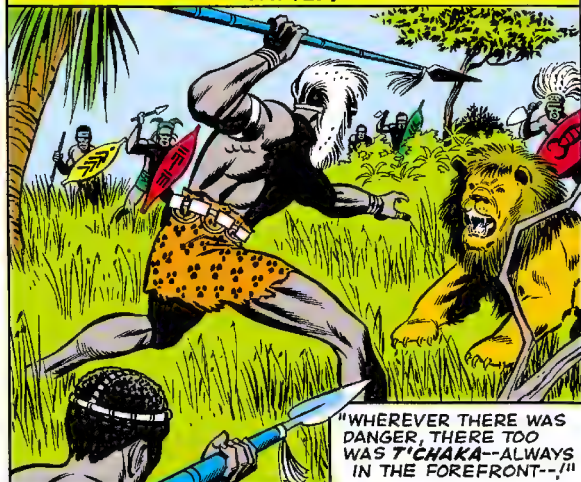




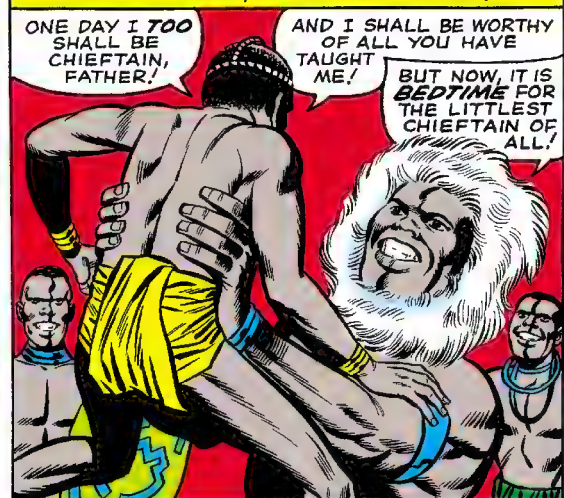




"MY FATHER WAS THE GREATEST CHIEFTAIN OF ALL! WISE IN COUNCIL--JUST IN JUDGEMENT--AND BRAVE IN BATTLE!"



"TO ME, HE WAS MORE THAN FATHER--MORE THAN WARRIOR--TO ME, HE WAS LIKE A **GOD**!"



LOOK, KIDDO--WHY DON'TCHA SAVE YERSELF THE TROUBLE? I KNOW THE REST BY **HEART**! EVERYTHING WUZ HUNKY DORY UNTIL THE **GREEDY VORY HUNTERS** MADE THE SCENE!

BEN! FOR THE **LAST TIME**, WILL YOU REMEMBER THAT WE'RE HIS **GUESTS**?!

DO NOT BE CONCERNED, REED RICHARDS! I REALIZE MY TALE MAY SOUND CONTRIVED TO YOU!



YER TALKIN' TO A GUY WHO SEEN EVERY **TARZAN** MOVIE AT LEAST A DOZEN TIMES, AND I CAN RECITE YA HALF'A THE **BOMBA, THE JUNGLE BOY** BOOKS BY **HEART**!

SO YER LITTLE BEDTIME STORY AINT IMPRESSIN' ME! LET'S GIT TO THE **PUNCHLINE**, HUH?





I DO NOT MIND THE **THING'S** INTERRUPTIONS!

PERHAPS MY TALE **DOES** FOLLOW THE USUAL PATTERN, EXCEPT FOR ONE THING! IT WAS NOT A GREEDY **IVORY HUNTER** WHO CAME TO OUR LAND! NO, IT WAS ONE FAR MORE **DANGEROUS**--FAR MORE **EVIL**--!

HE CALLED HIMSELF **K'LAU**, THE **MASTER OF SOUND**!--AND HE POSSESSED A WEAPON THE LIKE OF WHICH NO MAN HAD EVER SEEN BEFORE--A WEAPON WHICH COULD CONVERT **SOUND** INTO **MASS**!

THE **FOOLS**! THEY **MOCKED** ME WHEN I SAID THAT **VIBRANIUM** EXISTED! BUT NOW I HAVE **FOUND** IT, HERE IN THIS **JUNGLE**--AND, IT MUST BE **MINE**!

VIBRANIUM!!
THE ONE ELEMENT I NEED--THE ONE ELEMENT WHICH WILL POWER MY **SOUND TRANSFORMER**--SO THAT I MAY CHANGE THE BASIC ENERGY OF **SOUND** INTO ANY LIVING **FORM** I DESIRE!



"I STILL REMEMBER THE SIGHT OF **K'LAU**, THE UNSMILING--**K'LAU**, THE MERCILESS--ORDERING MY FATHER TO **GIVE UP** OUR SACRED MOUND--OUR PRECIOUS **ETERNAL ROCK**--!"

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE! ONCE I GAIN POSSESSION OF THE WORLD'S ONLY SUPPLY OF **VIBRANIUM**, ALL THE RICHES OF EARTH SHALL BE **MINE**!

BE GONE! THIS LAND IS **OURS**! SO SPEAKS **T'CHAKA**, THE CHIEFTAIN!
THEN **T'CHAKA** SHALL SPEAK **NO MORE**!

GUN HIM DOWN--NOW!



"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HEARD THE SOUND OF **GUNFIRE**--A SOUND I WAS TO REMEMBER ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE--!"

CRACK! CRACK!

FATHER!! FATHER!

THEY HAVE SLAIN **T'CHAKA**!

BUT, HIS DEATH SHALL BE **AVENGED**!

"I, WHO HAD LIVED IN THE JUNGLE SINCE BIRTH, HAD NEVER SEEN SUCH VIOLENCE AS I BEHELD THAT MOMENT--WHILE THE MACHINE-GUN FIRE OF **KLAW** FELL UPON OUR WARRIORS WITHOUT MERCY--!"



WE ARE **HELPLESS** BEFORE THE WITHERING FIRE OF THE INVADERS!!

FLEE, MY BRAVE ONES--**FLEE!** WE MUST LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY!

"BUT, OVER THE NOISE OF THE GUNFIRE--**ONE** SOUND KEPT ROARING IN MY ANGUISHED BRAIN--THE SOUND OF A **NAME**--A NAME I WOULD **HATE** FOR ALL ETERNITY--! THE NAME OF--**KLAW!**"

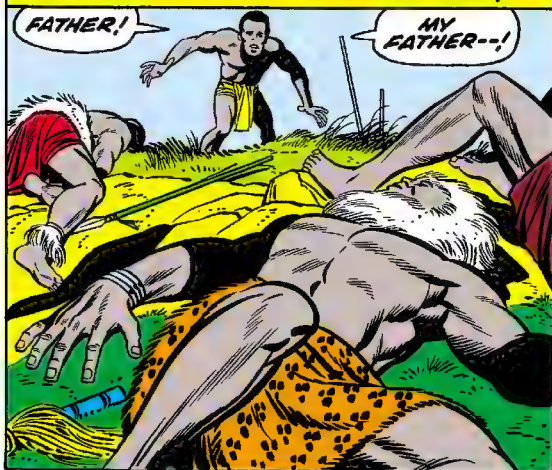


WE GOT 'EM, **KLAW!** THEY'RE ON THE **RUN!** THE MOUND IS **OURS!**

IT'S **MINE!** **MINE ALONE!** IT BELONGS TO **KLAW!** ONLY TO **KLAW!**

JUST AS ALL THE **WORLD** WILL ONE DAY BE **MINE!**

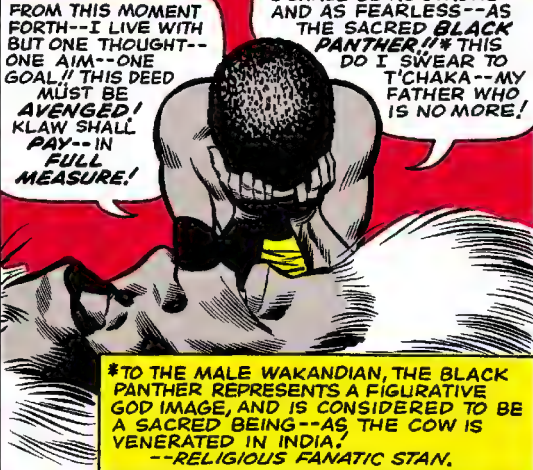
"SECONDS LATER, THE FIRING HAD CEASED--BUT, THE DEADLY SILENCE WHICH FOLLOWED WAS MORE DEAFENING--MORE FRAUGHT WITH DREAD--THAN ALL THE THUNDER THAT HAD GONE BEFORE!"



FATHER!

MY FATHER--!

"IN THAT SPLIT-SECOND, MY BOYHOOD ENDED--AS THE NEW **CHIEFTAIN** OF ALL THE **WAKANDAS** WAS BORN--!"

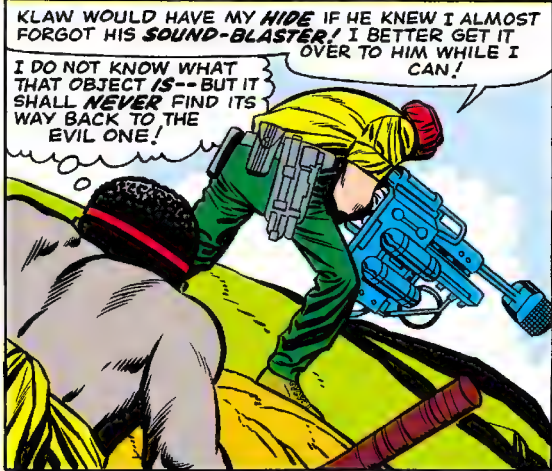


FROM THIS MOMENT FORTH--I LIVE WITH BUT ONE THOUGHT--ONE AIM--ONE GOAL!! THIS DEED MUST BE **AVENGED!** **KLAW** SHALL **PAY--** IN **FULL MEASURE!**

I SHALL BE AS STRONG--AND AS FEARLESS--AS THE **SACRED BLACK PANTHER!*** THIS DO I SWEAR TO **T'CHAKA--** MY FATHER WHO IS NO MORE!

*TO THE MALE **WAKANDIAN**, THE **BLACK PANTHER** REPRESENTS A FIGURATIVE GOD IMAGE, AND IS CONSIDERED TO BE A **SACRED BEING--**AS THE **COW** IS VENERATED IN **INDIA.**
--RELIGIOUS FANATIC **STAN.**

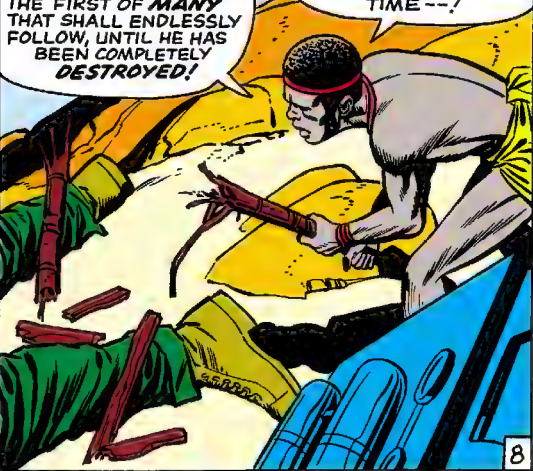
"SUDDENLY, I HEARD THE SOUND OF A MAN MUTTERING BEHIND ME! SILENTLY, WITH A SEETHING RAGE IN MY HEART, I TURNED--"



KLAW WOULD HAVE MY **HIDE** IF HE KNEW I ALMOST FORGOT HIS **SOUND-BLASTER!** I BETTER GET IT OVER TO HIM WHILE I CAN!

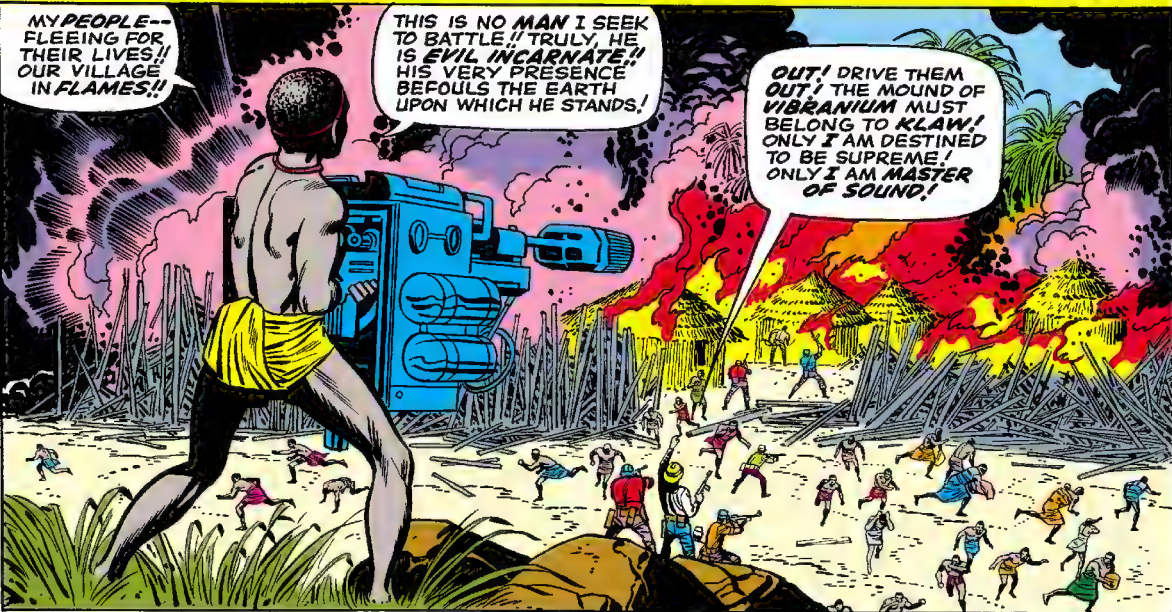
I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THAT OBJECT **IS--** BUT IT SHALL **NEVER** FIND ITS WAY BACK TO THE EVIL ONE!

THERE! THE FIRST BLOW HAS BEEN STRUCK AGAINST **KLAW!** THE FIRST OF **MANY** THAT SHALL ENDLESSLY FOLLOW, UNTIL HE HAS BEEN COMPLETELY **DESTROYED!**



NOW I MUST HASTEN **AFTER** HIM--WHILE THERE STILL IS **TIME--!**

"FINDING THE STRANGE WEAPON SURPRISINGLY LIGHT IN WEIGHT, I LIFTED IT, CARRYING IT WITH ME, UNTIL I REACHED THE GATES OF OUR VILLAGE, WHERE MY EYES BEHELD KLAU'S FINAL ACT OF VILLAINY--!"



MY PEOPLE--
FLEEING FOR
THEIR LIVES!!
OUR VILLAGE
IN FLAMES!!

THIS IS NO MAN I SEEK
TO BATTLE!! TRULY, HE
IS EVIL INCARNATE!!
HIS VERY PRESENCE
BEFOULS THE EARTH
UPON WHICH HE STANDS!

OUT! DRIVE THEM
OUT! THE MOUND OF
VIBRANIUM MUST
BELONG TO KLAU!
ONLY I AM DESTINED
TO BE SUPREME!
ONLY I AM MASTER
OF SOUND!

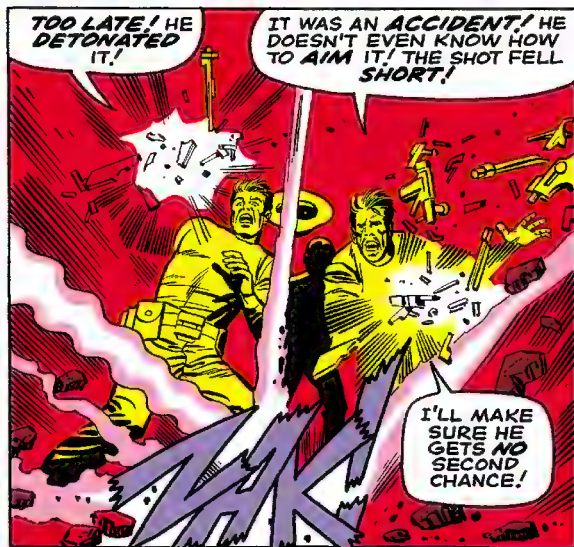
"WITHOUT CONSCIOUS THOUGHT, I AIMED THE FEAR-SOME OBJECT IN MY ARMS DIRECTLY AHEAD OF ME --WHILE MY FINGER BEGAN TO TIGHTEN ON THE TRIGGER, AS I CRIED--"



YOU HAVE SLAIN MY FATHER!
YOU HAVE PUT THE TORCH
TO OUR VILLAGE!
AND NOW YOU
MUST PAY--!

THE SOUND
BLASTER!!
HE'S ABOUT
TO FIRE IT!

STOP
HIM! HE
DOESN'T
KNOW
WHAT HE'S
DOING--!!

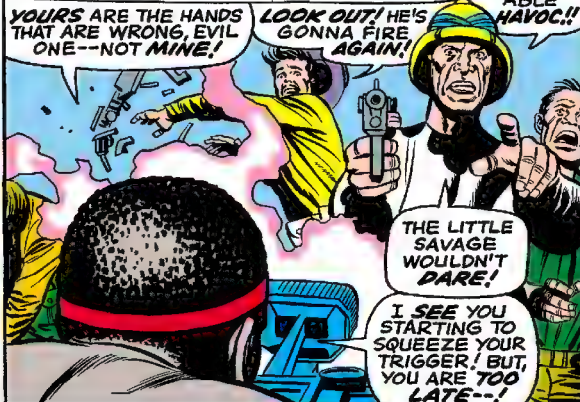


TOO LATE! HE
DETONATED
IT!

IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! HE
DOESN'T EVEN KNOW HOW
TO AIM IT! THE SHOT FELL
SHORT!

I'LL MAKE
SURE HE
GETS NO
SECOND
CHANCE!

YOU LITTLE FOOL! YOU CANNOT REALIZE THE FORCES YOU ARE TAMPERING WITH! THE DEVICE YOU HOLD CONVERTS SOUND INTO PURE ENERGY! IN THE WRONG HANDS, IT CAN WREAK UNMENTIONABLE HAVOC!!



YOURS ARE THE HANDS
THAT ARE WRONG, EVIL
ONE--NOT MINE!

LOOK OUT! HE'S
GONNA FIRE
AGAIN!

THE LITTLE
SAVAGE
WOULDN'T
DARE!

I SEE YOU
STARTING TO
SQUEEZE YOUR
TRIGGER! BUT,
YOU ARE TOO
LATE--!



THIS IS
FOR T'CHAKA--
THE
WARRIOR
KING!

MY
HAND!

RUN, KLAU--RUN! IT'S CERTAIN DEATH TO REMAIN HERE--WHILE HE HOLDS THE SOUND BLASTER!

BUT--THE VIBRANIUM!! I CAN'T GO WITHOUT THE VIBRANIUM--!!

YOU'LL HAVE TO! WE'RE NOT STAYING TO DIG IT UP FOR YOU! WE WANNA LIVE!

YOU'VE SHATTERED MY HAND--LOST ME MY MEN--BUT I'LL RETURN! THE VIBRANIUM WILL YET BE MINE!

THAT WAS TEN YEARS AGO--TO THE DAY!

I COULD NOT THEN PURSUE HIM, FOR THE SHOCK OF FIRING THOSE TWO MIGHTY BURSTS HAD DRAINED MY YOUTHFUL STRENGTH!

BUT, I KNOW HE WILL RETURN--I CAN SENSE THAT THE TIME HAS COME!

Y'KNOW--THAT STORY'S JUST PLAIN NUTTY ENUFF TO BE TRUE!

AND THIS TIME--I SHALL BE READY!

IT IS TRUE! I SOLD SMALL PORTIONS OF VIBRANIUM TO VARIOUS SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATIONS, ENABLING ME TO AMASS A FORTUNE--THE EQUAL OF ANY ON EARTH!

SO THAT'S HOW YA COULD AFFORD THAT FAR-OUT MECHANIZED JUNGLE OF YOURS!

THAT? I JUST DID IT FOR A LARK!

IT WAS A SIMPLE EXERCISE, TO TEST MY SKILL--FOR I HAD ATTENDED THE FINE UNIVERSITIES OF BOTH HEMISPHERES!

HOW ABOUT YER PANTHER POWER--THE WAY YA SEE IN THE DARK, 'N STUFF--!

A SECRET--HANDLED DOWN FROM CHIEFTAIN TO CHIEFTAIN!

WE EAT CERTAIN HERBS--AND UNDERGO RIGOROUS RITUALS--OF WHICH I AM FORBIDDEN TO SPEAK!

BUT, WHY THE HECK DIDJA TRY TO TRAP US?!!

I HAD TO! YOU FOUR WERE THE SUPREME TEST!

IF I COULD FIGHT YOU TO A STANDSTILL, THEN I AM READY FOR--KLAU!

ALTHOUGH HE HAS KEPT HIDDEN FROM ME ALL THESE YEARS, I KNOW HE IS PLANNING TO--

WAIT!!

IT HAS COME! THE LONG AWAITED, CRITICAL DANGER SIGNAL!!

WHEEE WHEEE WHEEE

CLICK

NOW WHAT?

WOTTA DEAL! YA MOVE ONE OF THEM CRAZY PANTHER STATUES, AND THE WHOLE BLASTED WALL SLIDES BACK!

QUIET! THIS SENSASCOPE IS RECORDING THE APPROACH OF A NAMELESS MENACE--FROM THE DIRECTION OF OUR SACRED MOUND!

KLAU HAS RETURNED!

AND, JUST A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, LUMBERING AWESOMELY INTO WAKANDA TERRITORY, WE SEE--

A GIGANTIC CRIMSON GORILLA! THE FORCE CANNON-- FIRE IT! FIRE!!

WHOOM!

IT IS PREDICTED THAT KLAU, THE SOUND MASTER, WILL RETURN THIS DAY! BUT SUCH A SIGHT AS THIS--NONE COULD HAVE EXPECTED!

WE MUST STAND FAST WHILE WE MAY!

THE BLACK PANTHER WILL BE HERE WITHIN MINUTES!

WHAT IS AMISS? WHY DOES THE FORCE GUN NOT STOP HIM--??

EVEN AS THE FORCE BOLT STRIKES HIM, HE SEEMS TO BE GATHERING ITS ENERGY WITHIN HIS BODY--AND NOW--IT-IT IS NOT POSSIBLE--!

--HE TOOK THE FULL IMPACT OF THE BLOW-- AND HURLS IT BACK AT US!

HE HAS DEMOLISHED OUR ADVANCE OUTPOST--WITH OUR OWN WEAPON!

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S UP, PANTHER--BUT IT'LL BE MORE FUN FIGHTING WITH YOU THAN AGAINST YOU!

FLAME ON!

I'VE COME THIS FAR WITH THE F.F.--I MIGHT AS WELL GO ALL THE WAY!

THERE IS NO NEED FOR YOU TO SHARE THE DANGER! THIS IS A BATTLE FOR THE SON OF T'CHAKA!

IF EVERYONE ELSE CAN BE A CORNBALL, SO CAN I!

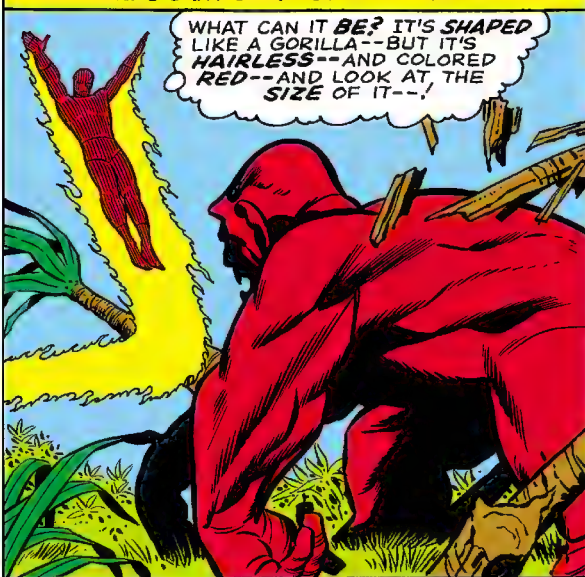
IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

A LITTLE ACTION WILL BE GOOD FOR JOHNNY-- TO STOP HIM FROM BROODING OVER CRYSTAL!

HENCE, I SHALL DON MY RITUALISTIC GARB, AS THE BLACK PANTHER STALKS AGAIN!

WAIT FOR ME, REED! WHATEVER IS OUT THERE--WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER!

SECONDS LATER, AS THE TORCH IS FIRST TO REACH THE GIGANTIC CRIMSON MONSTER--



WHAT CAN IT *BE*? IT'S *SHAPED* LIKE A GORILLA--BUT IT'S *HAIRLESS*--AND COLORED *RED*--AND LOOK AT THE *SIZE* OF IT--!

BUT THEN, SUDDENLY, THE FIERY YOUTH COMES TO A STARTLING REALIZATION--



HE *SEEMS* ALIVE--BUT HE *ISN'T*! HE *CAN'T* BE!

EVERY BEAST THAT LIVES FEARS MY *FLAME*--BUT HE DOESN'T!

AT THAT MOMENT...



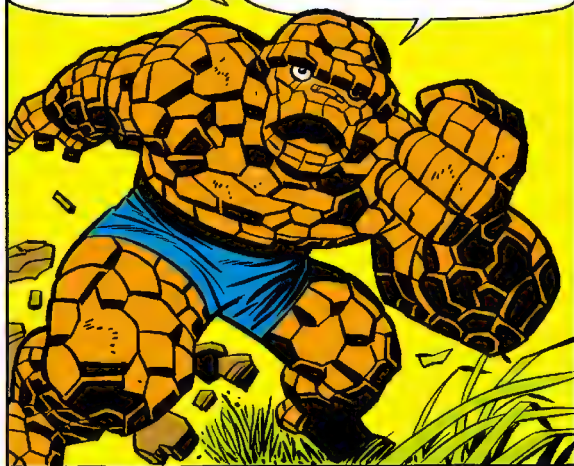
LOOKA *THAT*, STRETCH! THEY MUST BE FILMIN' A NEW *KING KONG*!

BUT WHO EVER HEARD OF A *RED, HAIRLESS GORILLA*?

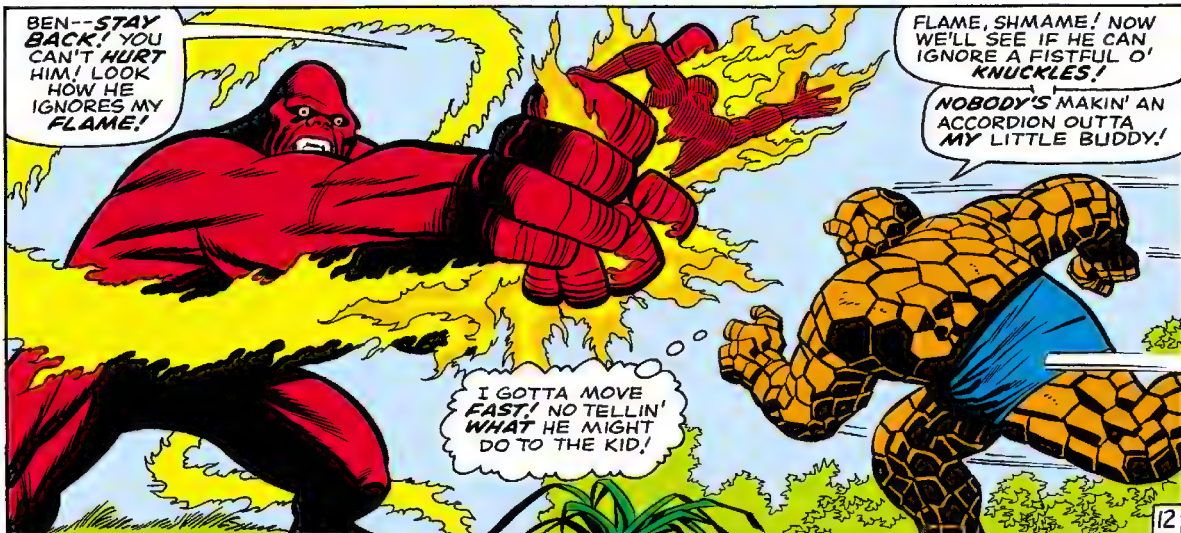
IT'S *NOT* A GORILLA, BEN! IT'S SOMETHING FAR MORE *DANGEROUS*!

WHAT DARLING? WHAT IS IT??

WHAT'S A *DIFFERENCE*? I'M GOIN' *AFTER* 'IM!



ANYTHING'S BETTER'N STAYIN' THERE 'N LISTENIN' TO ANOTHER ONE OF BIG DOME'S *EXPLANATIONS*!



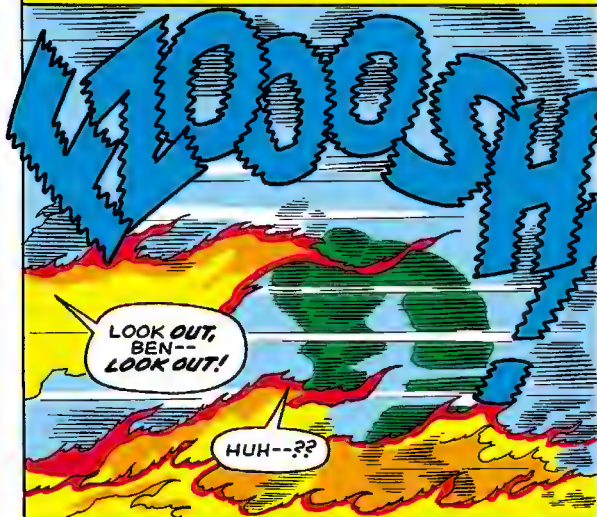
BEN--*STAY BACK*! YOU CAN'T *HURT* HIM! LOOK HOW HE IGNORES MY *FLAME*!

FLAME, SHMAME! NOW WE'LL SEE IF HE CAN IGNORE A FISTFUL O' *KNUCKLES*!

NOBODY'S MAKIN' AN ACCORDION OUTTA MY LITTLE BUDDY!

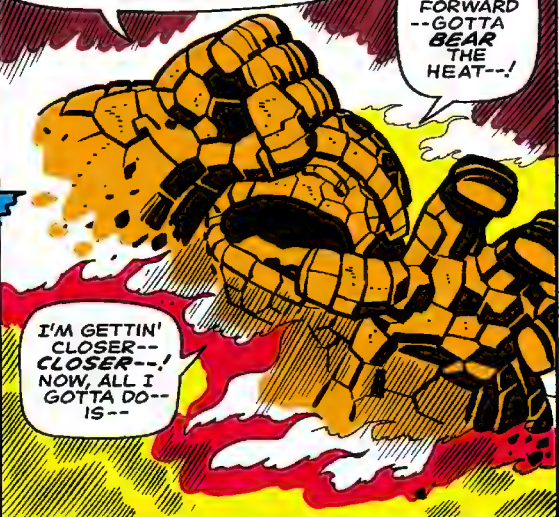
I GOTTA MOVE *FAST*! NO TELLIN' WHAT HE MIGHT DO TO THE KID!

BUT, EVEN BEFORE THE ONRUSHING BATTLER CAN GET WITHIN STRIKING RANGE OF THE TOWERING CREATURE, THE TORCH'S OWN HEAT IS SUDDENLY MAGNIFIED, AND HURLED BACK AT THE STARTLED THING--!



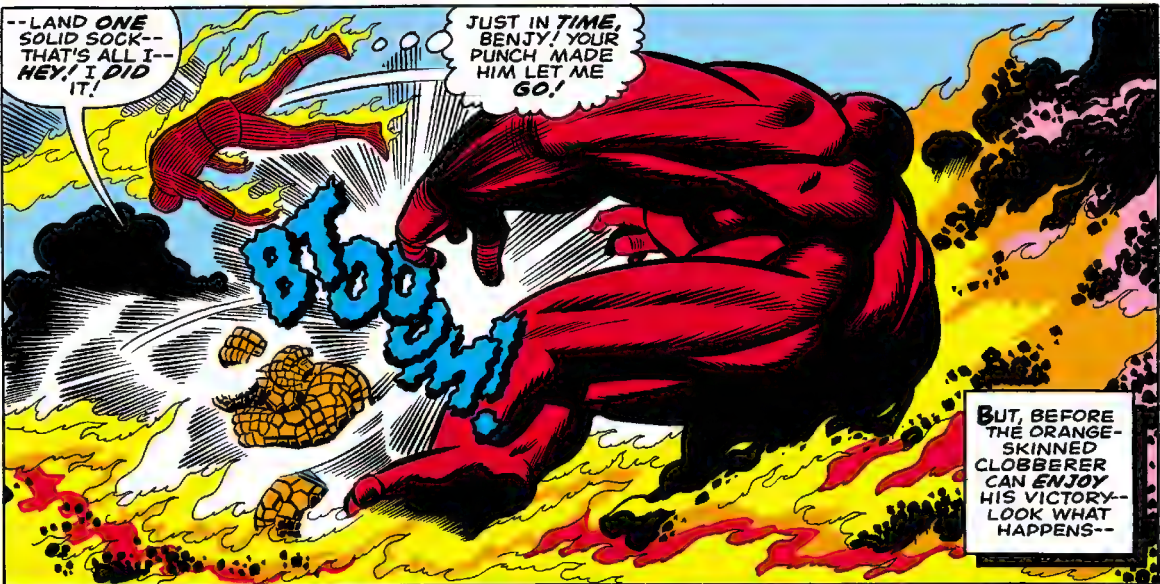
GETTIN' HOTTER EVERY SECOND!! BUT--CAN'T FALL BACK NOW!! THE TORCH NEEDS ME! HE NEEDS ME--!

GOTTA KEEP MOVIN' FORWARD--GOTTA BEAR THE HEAT--!



--LAND ONE SOLID SOCK-- THAT'S ALL I-- HEY! I DID IT!

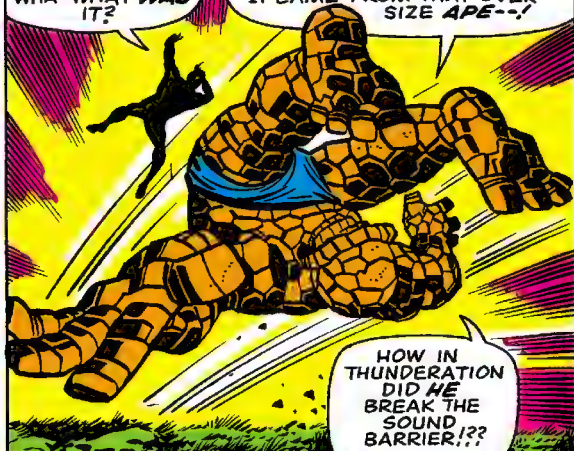
JUST IN TIME, BENJY! YOUR PUNCH MADE HIM LET ME GO!



BUT, BEFORE THE ORANGE-SKINNED CLOBBERER CAN ENJOY HIS VICTORY--LOOK WHAT HAPPENS--

THAT NOISE!! IT ALMOST DEAFENED ME! WHA-WHAT WAS IT?

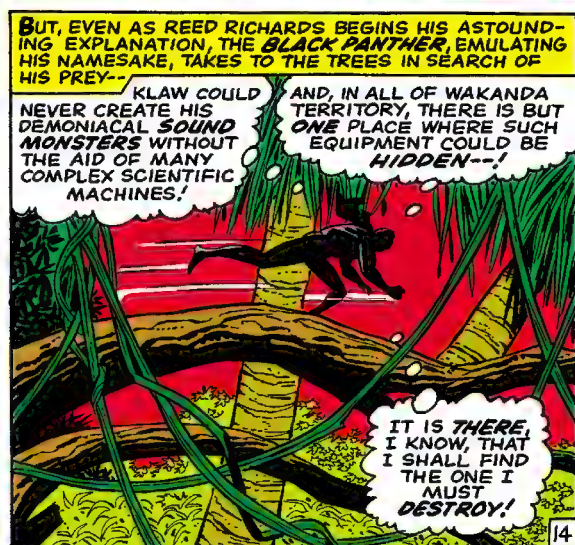
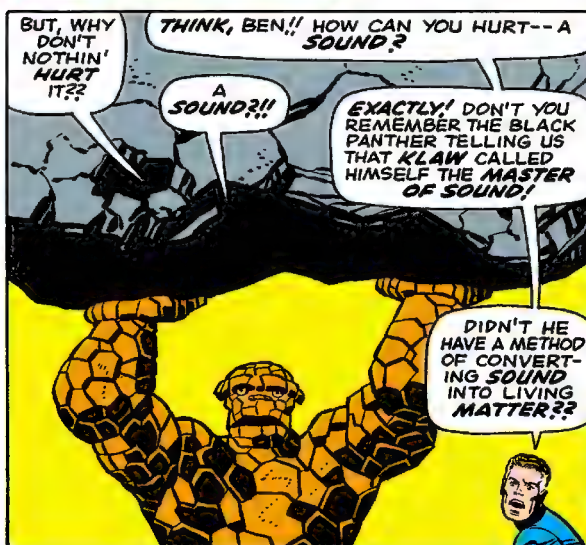
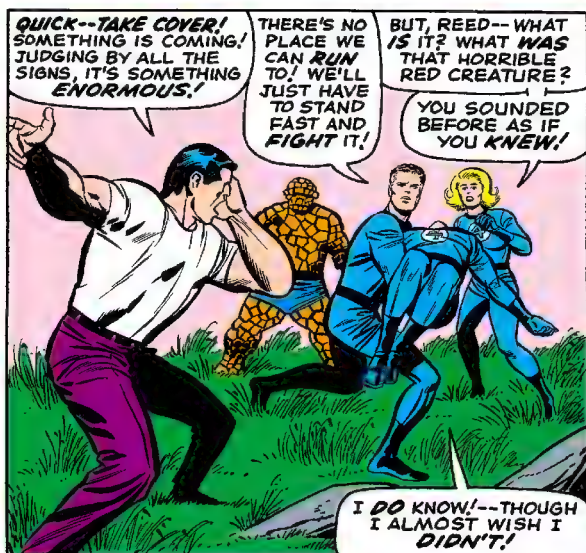
DON'TCHA KNOW A SONIC BOOM WHEN YA HEAR ONE, JUNIOR! BUT, I DON'T GET IT--IT CAME FROM THAT OVER-SIZE APE--!

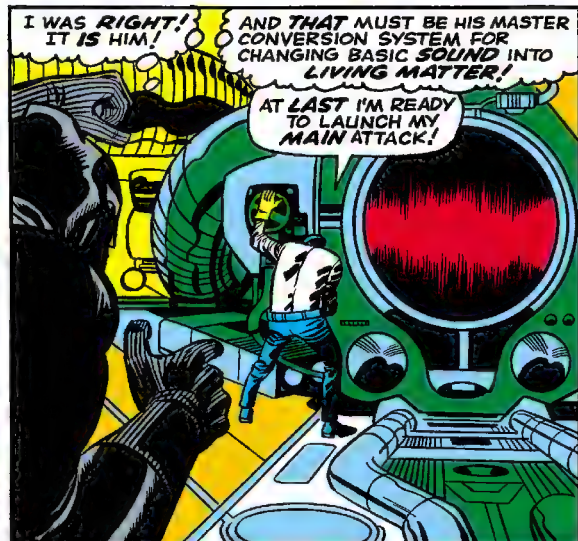
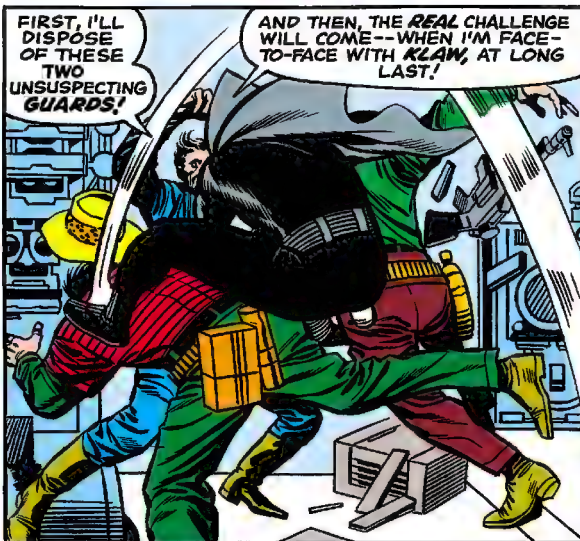


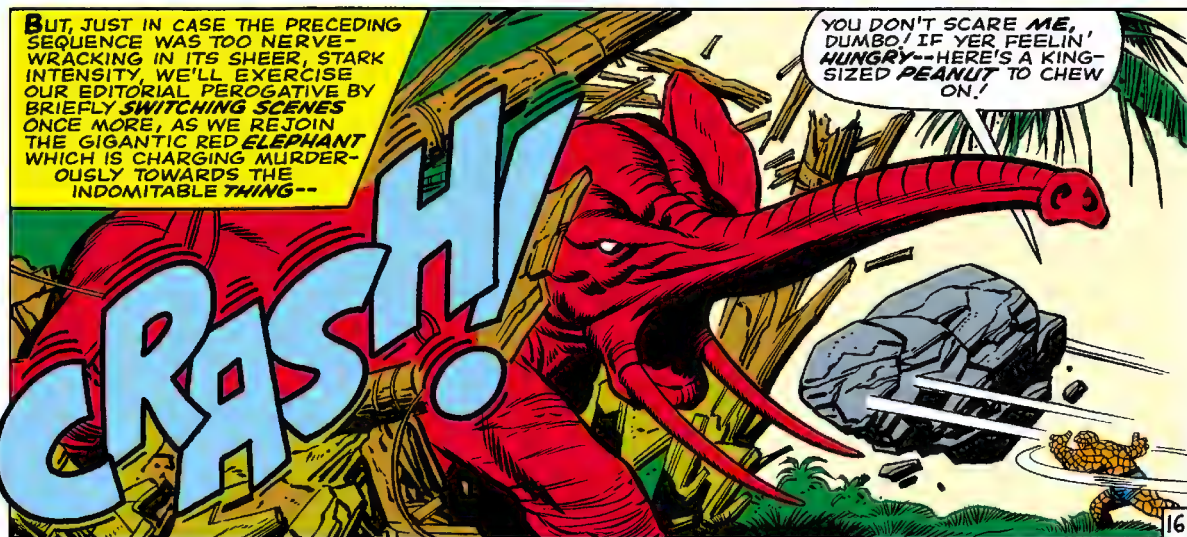
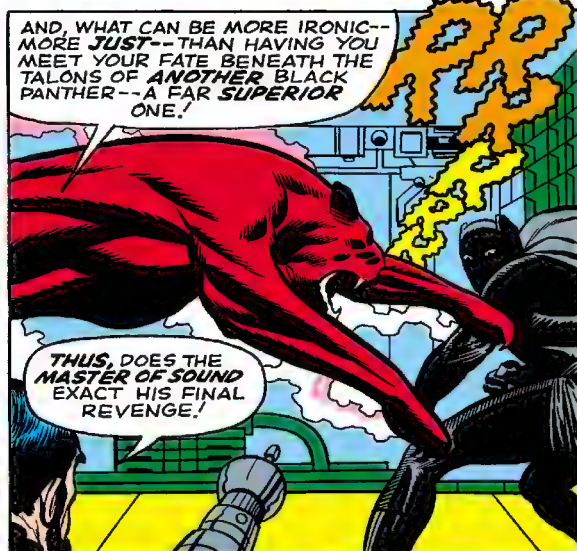
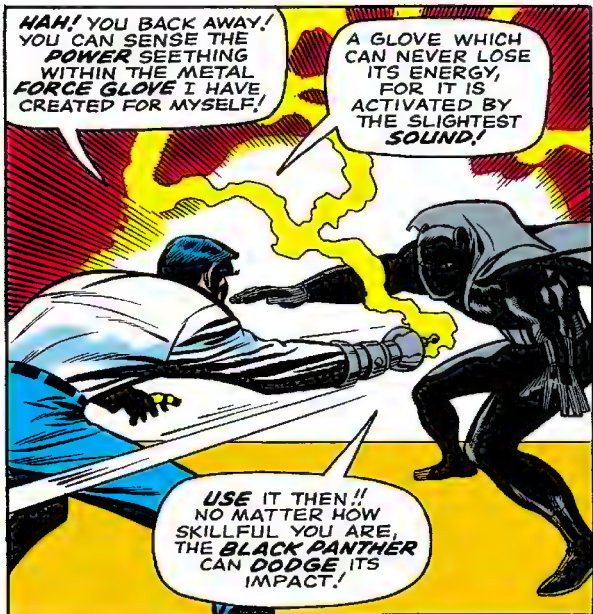
I'LL ANSWER YOU LATER, BIG BUDDY! RIGHT NOW, I WANNA ENJOY SINKING INTO SUSIE'S FRIENDLY LITTLE FORCE FIELD!

DIDJA EVER HAVE A FEELIN' YA GOT STUCK IN THE WRONG NIGHTMARE?







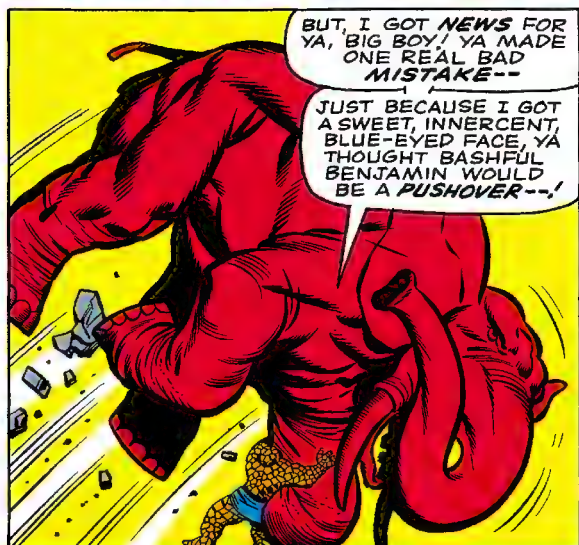
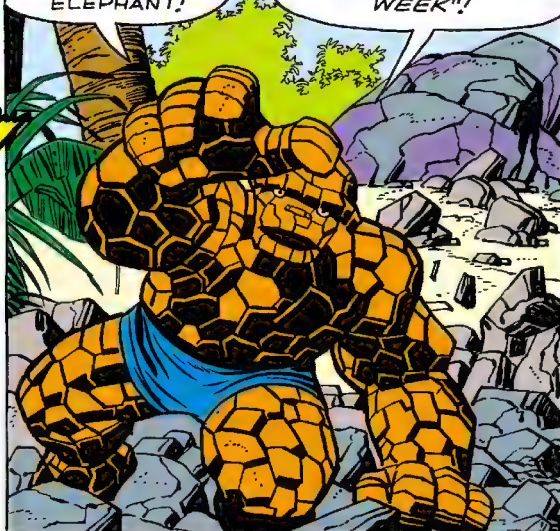


BUT, NO SOONER DOES THE MOUNTAINOUS BOULDER STRIKE THE CHARGING BEAST, THAN IT CRUMBLES INTO A THOUSAND SMALLER FRAGMENTS, RICOCHETTING BACK AT THE DUMBFOUNDED HUMAN POWERHOUSE--!



IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT REALLY BUGS ME, IT'S A WISE-GUY ELEPHANT!

IT'S THE ONES LIKE YOU THAT MAKE A JOKE OUTTA "BE KIND TO DUMB ANIMALS WEEK"!



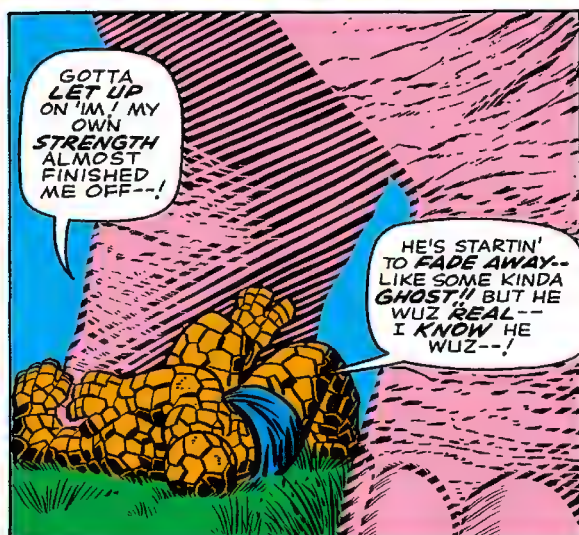
BUT, I GOT NEWS FOR YA, BIG BOY! YA MADE ONE REAL BAD MISTAKE--

JUST BECAUSE I GOT A SWEET, INNERCENT, BLUE-EYED FACE, YA THOUGHT BASHFUL BENJAMIN WOULD BE A PUSHOVER--!

BUT, NOW I'M GONNA--

HEY! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?? THIS IS CRAZY!! IT-IT DON'T MAKE SENSE--!

THE MORE PRESSURE I PUT ON 'IM, THE MORE IT HURTS ME-- JUST LIKE HE'S REFLECTIN' IT ALL BACK-- LIKE A MIRROR!



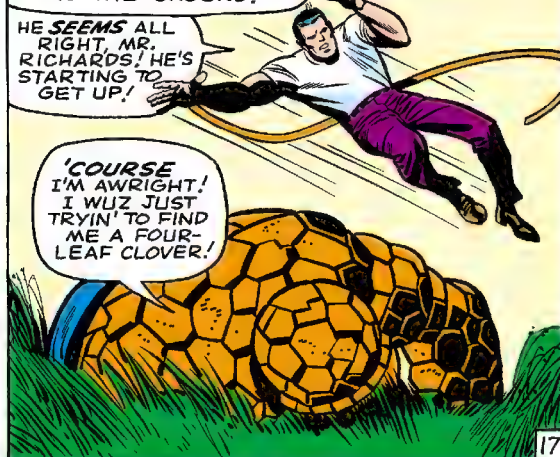
GOTTA LET UP ON 'IM! MY OWN STRENGTH ALMOST FINISHED ME OFF--!

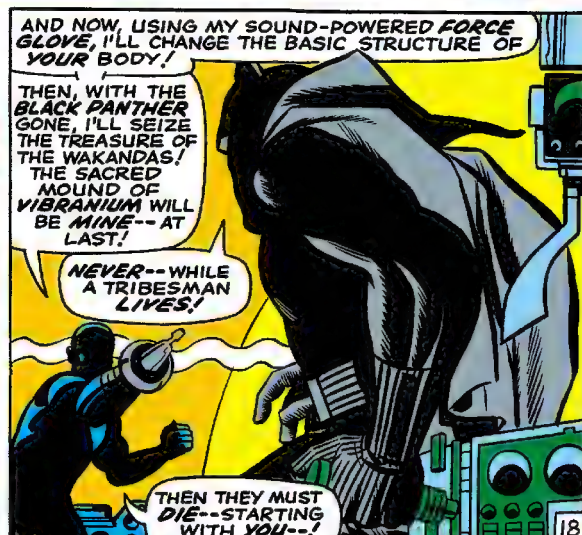
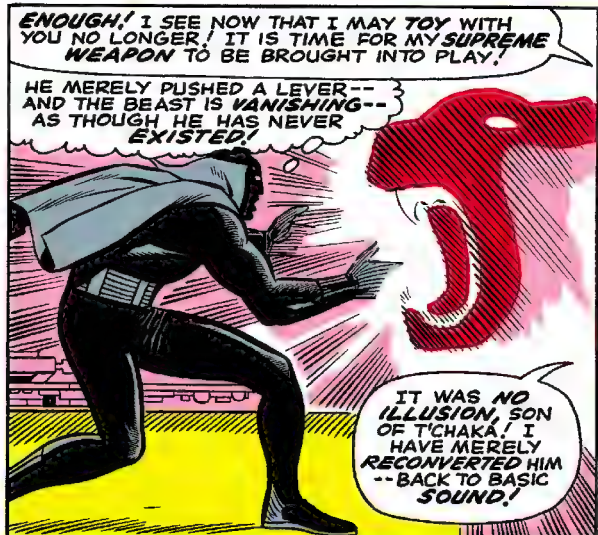
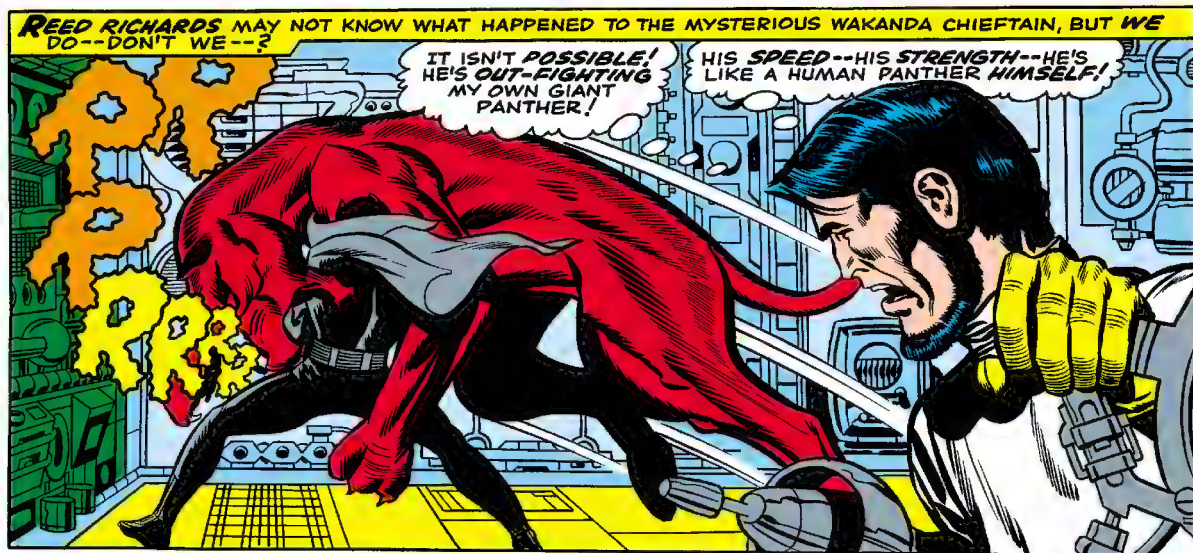
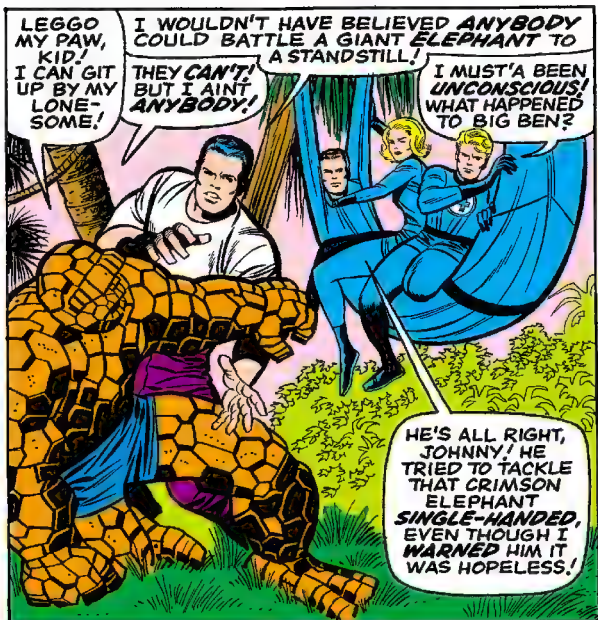
HE'S STARTIN' TO FADE AWAY-- LIKE SOME KINDA GHOST!! BUT HE WUZ REAL-- I KNOW HE WUZ--!

WYATT! THE ELEPHANT'S GONE! SEE IF BEN NEEDS ANY HELP-- WHILE I LOWER SUE AND JOHNNY TO THE GROUND!

HE SEEMS ALL RIGHT, MR. RICHARDS! HE'S STARTING TO GET UP!

'COURSE I'M AWRIGHT! I WUZ JUST TRYIN' TO FIND ME A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER!





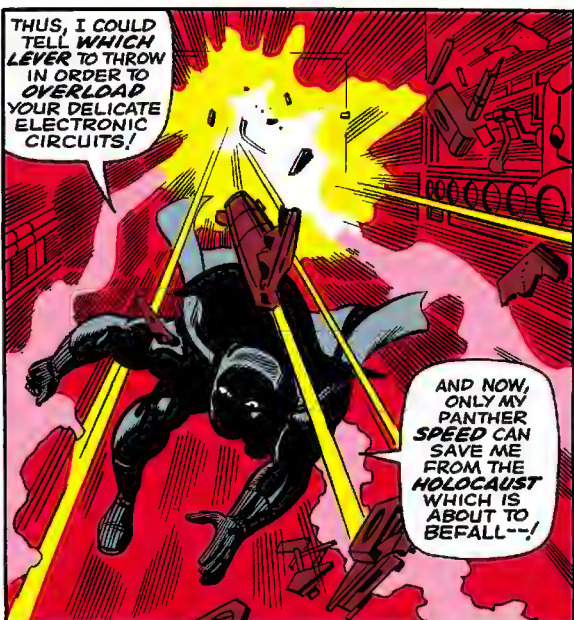


BUT, BEFORE THE MAD **MASTER OF SOUND** CAN ACTIVATE HIS STRANGE WEAPON, THE **BLACK PANTHER**, MOVING AS SWIFTLY AS HIS NAMESAKE, HURLS THE FATAL **POWER SWITCH** WHICH HIS NIMBLE FINGERS HAD BEEN SILENTLY GROPING FOR--!

MY **CONVERTER**, IT--IT'S BEING **BLOWN APART!!**

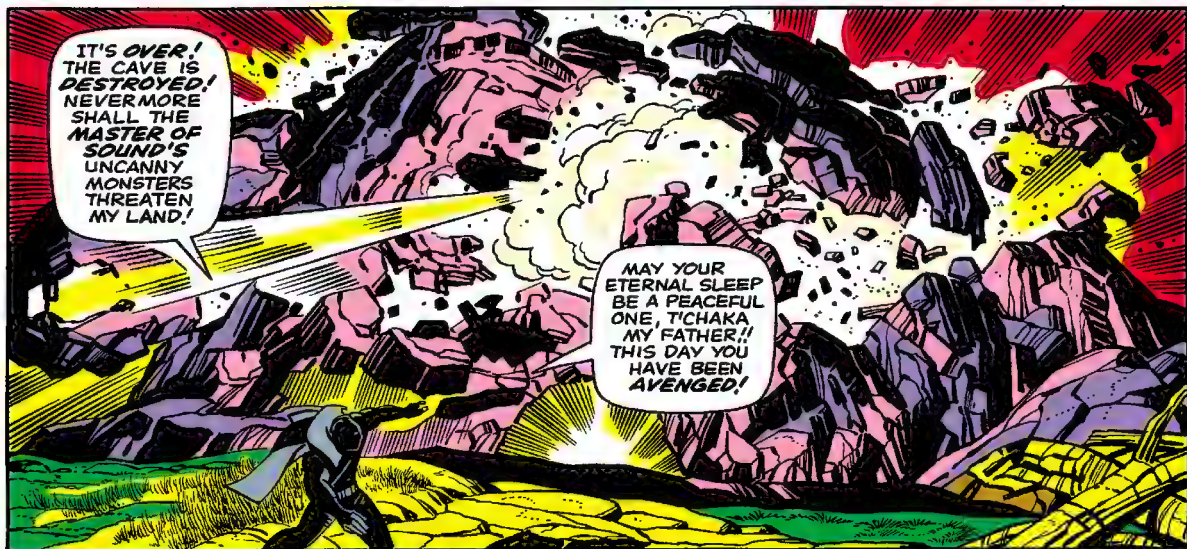
IT HAS TO END THIS WAY-- IN THE NAME OF **JUSTICE!**

YOU DID NOT REALIZE-- I AM A **SCIENTIST**, TOO--!



THUS, I COULD TELL WHICH **LEVER** TO THROW IN ORDER TO **OVERLOAD** YOUR DELICATE **ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS!**

AND NOW, ONLY MY **PANTHER SPEED** CAN SAVE ME FROM THE **HOLOCAUST** WHICH IS ABOUT TO BEFALL--!



IT'S OVER! THE CAVE IS **DESTROYED!** NEVERMORE SHALL THE **MASTER OF SOUND'S** UNCANNY MONSTERS THREATEN MY LAND!

MAY YOUR ETERNAL SLEEP BE A PEACEFUL ONE, T'CHAKA MY FATHER!! THIS DAY YOU HAVE BEEN **AVENGED!**



AT THAT MOMENT, THOUSANDS OF YARDS AWAY, FIVE PAIR OF STARTLED EYES SEE THE ELECTRIFYING UPHEAVAL--

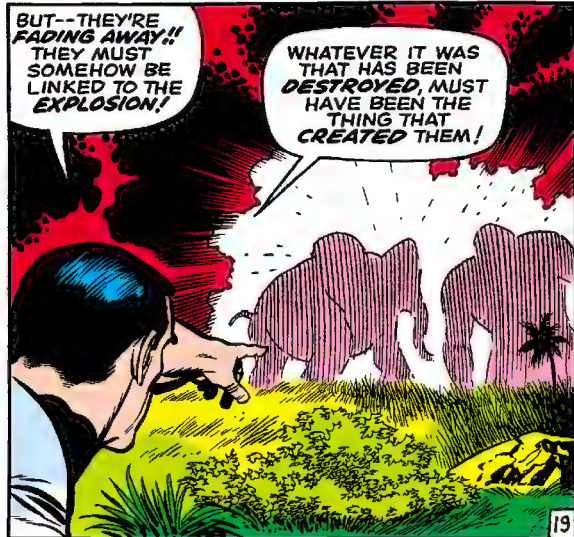
THAT ENTIRE **HILL--** IT'S BEEN SHATTERED INTO **NOTHINGNESS!**

WHAT IS IT, REED? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

I'M NOT SURE, JOHNNY-- BUT I HAVE A FEELING THAT THE **BLACK PANTHER** IS SOMEHOW RESPONSIBLE!

THE SOUND IS **DEAFENING!** IT'S LIKE THE END OF THE WORLD! HOLD ME, MY DARLING--!

HEY! LOOK-- OVER THERE! A COUPLE MORE OF THEM REFUGEES FROM **GOD-ZILLA!**



BUT--THEY'RE **FADING AWAY!!** THEY MUST SOMEHOW BE LINKED TO THE **EXPLOSION!**

WHATEVER IT WAS THAT HAS BEEN **DESTROYED**, MUST HAVE BEEN THE THING THAT **CREATED THEM!**

IT WAS **KLAW** WHO CREATED THEM--**KLAW**, WHO, IN HIS MADNESS, LEARNED THE INCREDIBLE SECRET OF TRANSFORMING **SOUND** INTO **MASS**!

BUT, I DESTROYED HIS ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT! IT WOULD TAKE HIM A **LIFETIME** TO REPLACE IT--IF HE SURVIVED!

SO THAT'S WHY THEM NUTTY ANIMALS FADED AWAY!

THEN YOUR MISSION IS ENDED!

YES--THE **MASTER OF SOUND** HAS BEEN DEFEATED!

BUT, SOMEHOW, I CANNOT BELIEVE IT IS OVER! I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT THE **BLACK PANTHER** WILL STALK NO MORE!

DON'T GIT ALL SHOOK UP, PAL! MEBBE THE **YANCY STREET GANG** CAN USE YA!

BENJAMIN J. GRIMM, THAT WASN'T FUNNY!

WELL, YA CAN'T WIN EM ALL!

THERE'S NO REASON FOR THE **BLACK PANTHER'S** CAREER TO COME TO AN END! THE WORLD WILL **ALWAYS** HAVE NEED OF A DEDICATED, POWERFUL FIGHTER AGAINST INJUSTICE!

REED'S RIGHT, FELLA! THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING TODAY, YOU NEVER HEAR OF A SUPER-HERO BEING OUT OF WORK!

I SHALL **DO IT**! I PLEDGE MY FORTUNE, MY POWERS--MY VERY LIFE--TO THE SERVICE OF ALL MANKIND!

ANYWAY, WITH A COSTUME LIKE THAT, YA CAN ALWAYS BECOME A **RASSLER**, OR A NEW KINDA FOLK SINGER!

BUT, EVEN AS THE GALLANT **BLACK PANTHER** DEDICATES HIMSELF TO AIDING HUMANITY; AMIDST THE CARNAGE AND RUBBLE OF THE SHATTERED HILLOCK, ANOTHER TYPE OF DEDICATION IS ABOUT TO BE MADE--

MY LIFE'S WORK--SHATTERED--**RUIINED**--ALL BECAUSE OF T'CHAKA'S SON AGAIN!

BUT, BY SOME STRANGE QUIRK OF FATE--THE **MASTER OF SOUND** STILL LIVES!

AND, MY **CONVERTER** STILL POSSESSES A GLIMMER OF ENERGY--PERHAPS ENOUGH FOR ONE FINAL TRANSFORMATION!!

THERE IS **ONE** EXPERIMENT I NEVER DARED TO MAKE--**ONE CHALLENGE** I NEVER DARED ACCEPT!

I NEVER LEARNED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF--A **HUMAN** ALTERED HIS OWN BASIC STRUCTURE VIA MY **SOUND TRANSFORMER**!!

IF I **SURVIVE**, I'LL EMERGE WITH POWERS FAR DIFFERENT THAN THOSE EVER POSSESSED BY MORTAL MAN--!

POWERS ENOUGH TO ENABLE ME TO **DESTROY** THE ACCURSED **BLACK PANTHER**--

--AND, AFTER HIM--ANYONE ELSE I SO CHOOSE!

IT IS NOT UNLIKELY THAT WE SHALL MEET THE **BLACK PANTHER** AND HIS ARCH-FOE, **KLAW**, ONCE AGAIN--BUT, TILL WE DO, DON'T MISS THE START OF A BRAND-NEW STORY LINE NEXT ISH! YOU KNOW HOW IT **UPSETS** US WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN AT THE **BEGINNING**!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
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Fantastic

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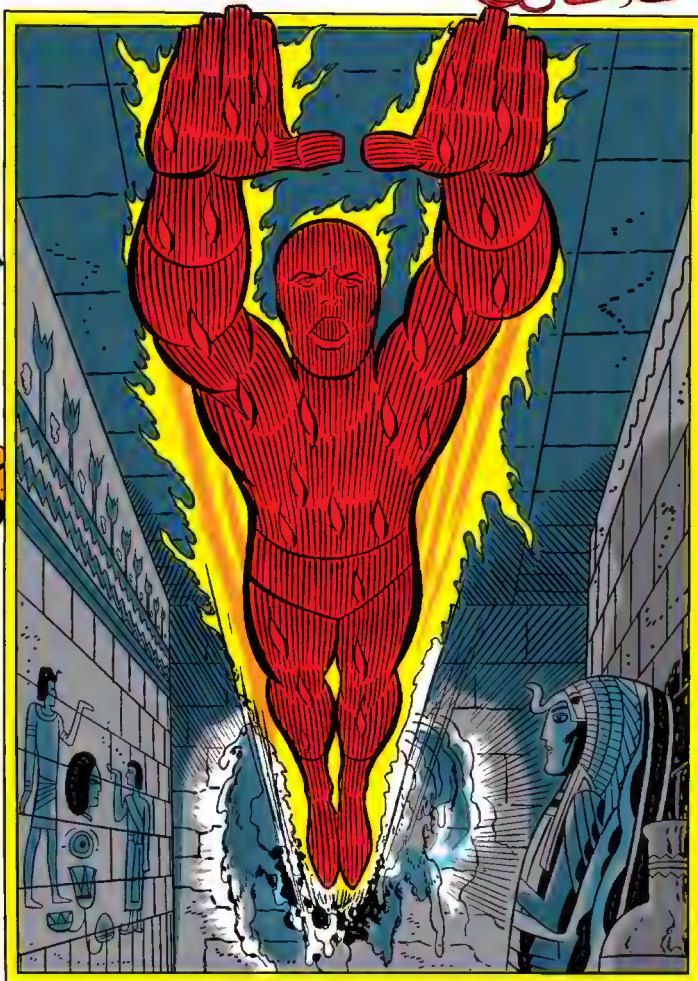
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Four

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FEATURING: A FLAMING,
FLYING, FIGHTING-MAD
HUMAN TORCH!

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP



THE FABULOUS F.F. GO THEIR SEPARATE WAYS!

"WHO SOEVER FINDS THE EVIL EYE..!"

SURE YOU'VE SEEN
BASEBALL GAMES
BEFORE! BUT, WE
THINK YOU'LL FIND
THIS ONE JUST A
LITTLE BIT...
DIFFERENT!

HEADS UP, KIDDIES!
MY KNUCKLE-DUSTER
PITCH CAN MAKE A
BULLET LOOK LIKE
IT'S STANDIN' STILL!

TAKE IT EASY, BEN! EVEN THAT TITANIUM BAT...
WHICH THE BLACK PANTHER GAVE US...MIGHT
BUCKLE UNDER IF YOU REALLY BEAR DOWN!

JUST PUT IT OVER THE
PLATE, MR. GRIMM!

THIS WILL
NEVER
REPLACE
LION-
HUNTING,
MY
FRIENDS!

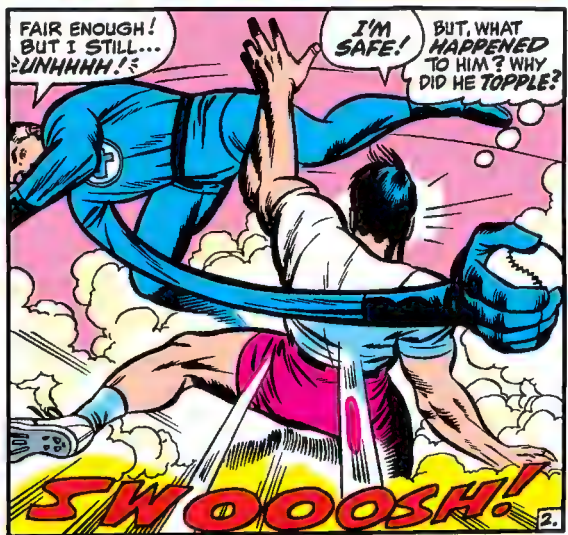
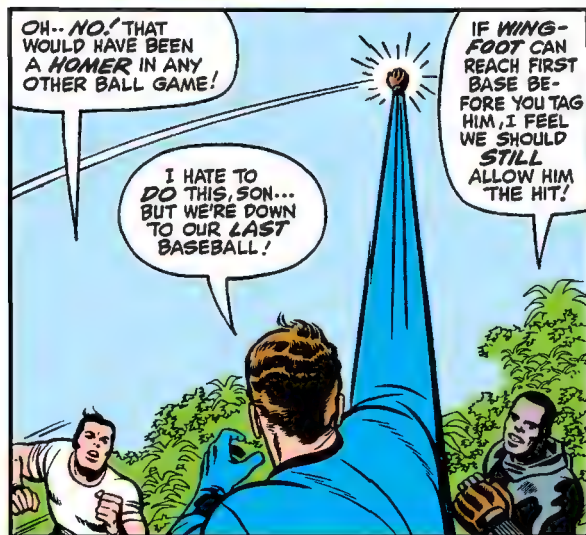
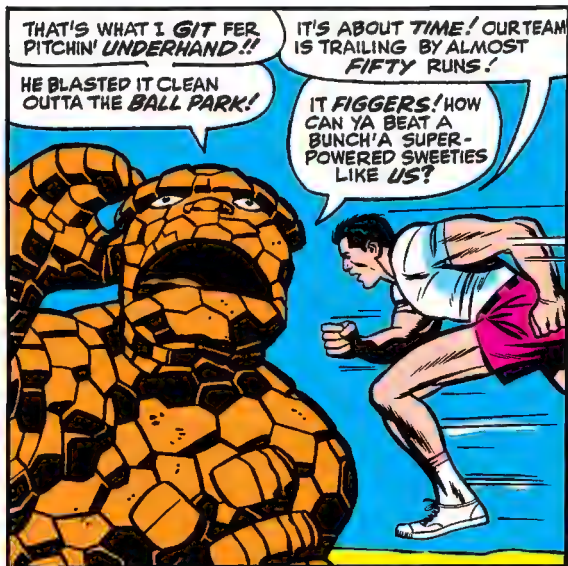
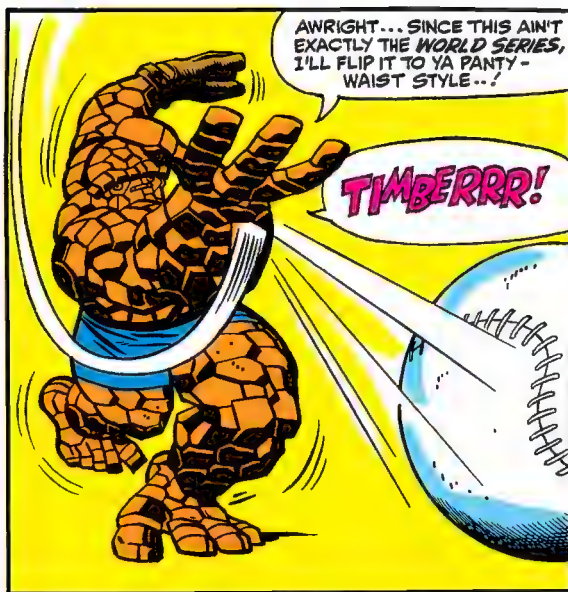
YOU'RE WAY
AHEAD OF
'IM, BENJY
BOY!

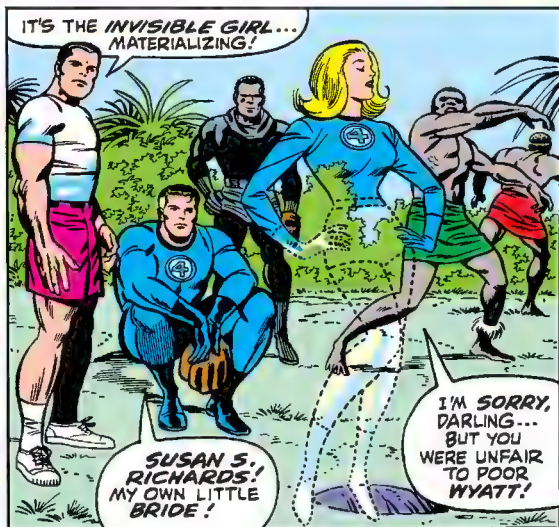
CAREFUL, JOHNNY!
NO MITT IS PADDED
ENOUGH TO HANDLE
BEN'S FAST BALL!

POOR WYATT!
HE DOESN'T KNOW
WHAT HE'S IN FOR
IF BEN REALLY
LET'S GO!

BY THEIR
LUSTER SHALL
YE KNOW
THEM!

SCRIPT: SMILIN' STAN LEE
ART: JOLLY JACK KIRBY
INKING: JOVIAL JOE SINNOTT
LETTERING: SNARLIN' SAM ROSEN





HOURS LATER, AT DINNER TIME, HE WHO IS CALLED THE **BLACK PANTHER**...WHO IS THIS HEREDITARY CHIEFTAIN OF THE MIGHTY **WAKANDAS**...HE WHOSE **WEALTH** IS VIRTUALLY BEYOND CALCULATION...INTRODUCES THE WORLD'S MOST RENOWNED **PIANIST**, WHOM HE HAS FLOWN TO HIS PALACE FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF ENTERTAINING HIS COLORFUL GUESTS...!



MY NEXT SELECTION WILL BE **GRIEG'S PIANO CONCERTO IN A MINOR... OPUS 16!**

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT A SCENE LIKE THIS CAN BE TAKING PLACE IN THE HEART OF THE **JUNGLE!**

WILL YOU NOT HAVE SOME RARE DELICACIES?

WHERE THE **BLACK PANTHER** IS CONCERNED, ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE!

JOHNNY'S BEEN **BROODING** FOR HOURS! I WONDER WHAT'S WRONG?

NO, THANKS! NOT NOW!

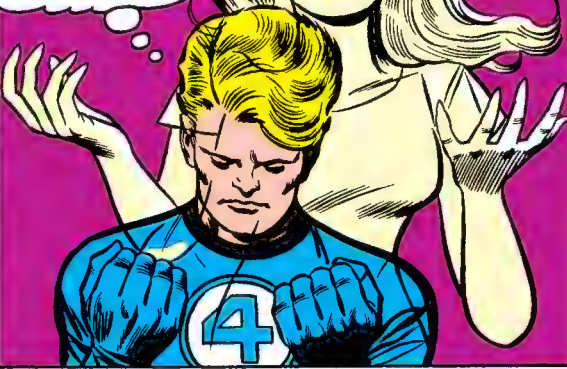
THAT'S A **HECKUVA BEAT TA FRUG TO!**

M'WABU! MORE **NECTAR** FOR OUR HONORED GUESTS!

BUT, ONE GUEST THERE IS WHO DOES NOT EVEN **HEAR** THE MAGNIFICENT MELODIES... FOR HIS THOUGHTS CONSTANTLY RETURN TO A SAD-EYED GIRL... A GIRL HE CAN NEVER FORGET...

THE NIGHTS ARE THE HARDEST! I KEEP HEARING HER VOICE IN MY BRAIN... WHISPERING... PLEADING... CALLING TO ME...!

JOHNNY! WHERE ARE YOU? I'LL NEVER STOP WAITING FOR YOU... MY JOHNNY!



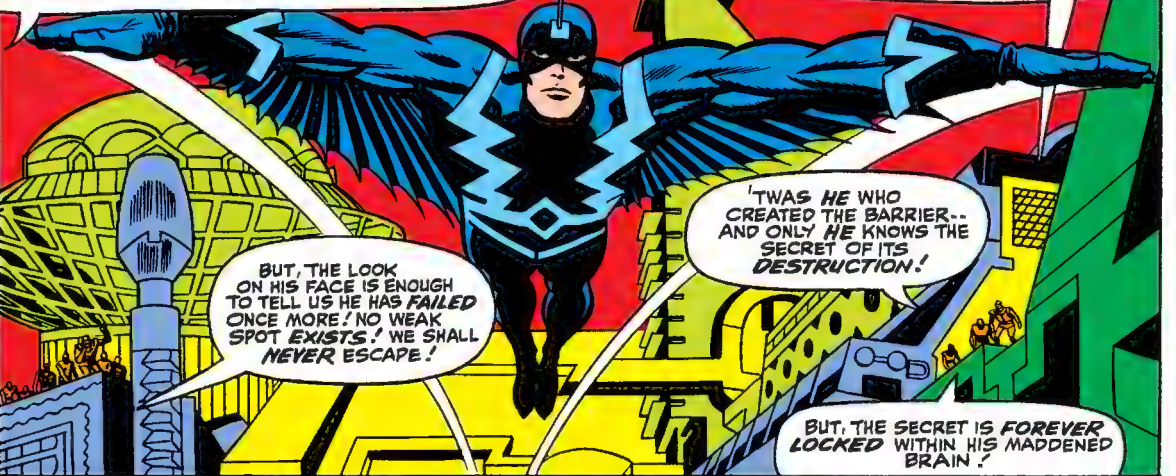
... A GIRL, UNLIKE ANY OTHER GIRL ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH! AND, IN A LAND WHERE FEW HAVE EVER TROD, SHE IS IMPRISONED BEHIND A BARRIER WHICH NO MAN CAN SHATTER... THE BARRIER BENEATH WHICH THE **INNUMANS** DWELL!

WE SHALL **NEVER** STOP TRYING TO FIND A MEANS OF **SMASHING** THIS ACCURSED BARRIER!



EVEN NOW, **BLACK BOLT** RETURNS... FROM HIS DAILY MISSION OF GLIDING AROUND THE CITY, SEEKING ANY POSSIBLE **WEAK SPOT** IN THE ETERNAL DOME!

'TIS ALL THE DOING OF **MAXIMUS**, THE NOW-MAD BROTHER OF **BLACK BOLT**!



BUT, THE LOOK ON HIS FACE IS ENOUGH TO TELL US HE HAS **FAILED** ONCE MORE! NO **WEAK SPOT EXISTS**! WE SHALL **NEVER** ESCAPE!

'T WAS HE WHO CREATED THE BARRIER-- AND ONLY HE KNOWS THE SECRET OF ITS **DESTRUCTION**!

BUT, THE SECRET IS **FOREVER LOCKED** WITHIN HIS MADDENED BRAIN!

YET, ALTHOUGH THEY KNOW FULL WELL THAT THEIR CAUSE IS VIRTUALLY **HOPELESS**, THE AWESOME **INNUMANS** DESPERATELY REACH OUT FOR ANY FAINT RAY OF HOPE... OF ENCOURAGEMENT...

BLACK BOLT... DID YOU FIND ANYTHING AT ALL? EVEN THE SLIGHTEST **WEAK SPOT** IN THE BARRIER?

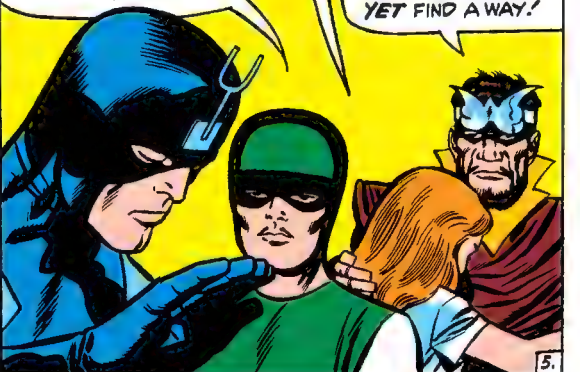
OR, HAVE YOU FOUND THE SECRET WHICH ONLY YOUR **BROTHER** KNOWS? AFTER ALL... YOUR BRAIN IS AS KEEN AS HIS!



THOUGH YOU ARE DENIED THE POWER OF **SPEECH**, YOUR MEANING IS **ABUNDANTLY CLEAR**! WE ARE **STILL** DOOMED TO LIVE OUT OUR LIVES BENEATH THIS ACCURSED DOME!

OH, **GORGON**... IF I CANNOT SEE **JOHNNY STORM** AGAIN, THEN NOTHING ELSE MATTERS! IT IS AS THOUGH MY LIFE HAS **ALREADY** COME TO AN END!

DO NOT DESPAIR, MY CHILD! WE SHALL **YET** FIND A WAY!



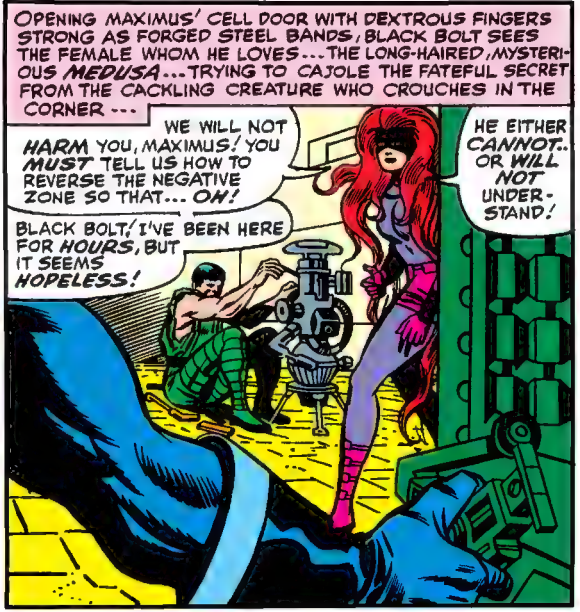


LET US FOLLOW BLACK BOLT! HE GOES TO VISIT **MAXIMUS** ONCE MORE!

FOR HE KNOWS FULL WELL... AS DO WE **ALL**... THAT ONLY THE EVIL **MAXIMUS** KNOWS HOW TO **REVERSE** THE NEGATIVE CHARGE OF HIS DREADED **ATMOS GUN**... AND NOTHING ELSE ON EARTH CAN SHATTER THE BARRIER!

BUT, SINCE **BLACK BOLT** DEFEATED **MAXIMUS**... AND REGAINED THE THRONE WHICH WAS USURPED FROM HIM... HIS BROTHER HAS BECOME A **BABBLING MADMAN**!

TRUE, CRYSTAL! BUT **BLACK BOLT** IS STILL THE **POWER**! TRUST HIM, MY CHILD!



WE WILL NOT **HARM** YOU, **MAXIMUS**! YOU **MUST** TELL US HOW TO **REVERSE** THE NEGATIVE ZONE SO THAT... **ON!**

HE EITHER **CANNOT..** OR WILL **NOT** **UNDER-** **STAND!**

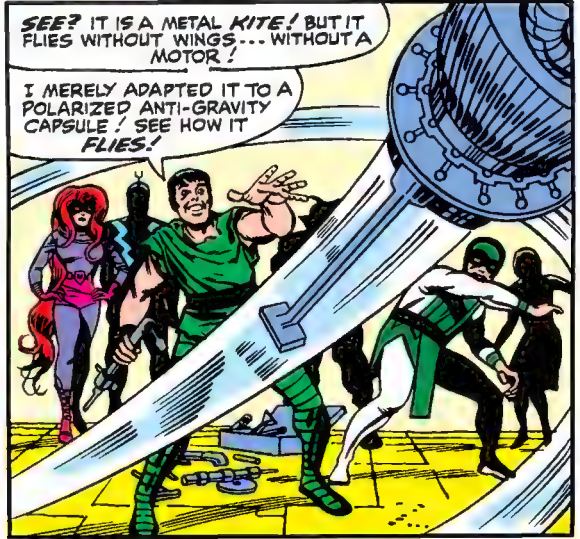
BLACK BOLT, I'VE BEEN HERE FOR **HOURS**, BUT IT SEEMS **HOPELESS**!



AHH! I AM GLAD YOU HAVE **COME**! NOW, I CAN SHOW YOU WHAT I HAVE **BUILT**! YOU WILL BE ABLE TO SEE HOW **CLEVER** **MAXIMUS** IS!

HE SPEAKS WITH THE TONE OF AN INCOHERENT **CHILD**! HE LIVES IN A FANTASY WORLD OF HIS OWN MAKING!

SHOW US, MAXIMUS! WHAT HAVE YOU CREATED?



SEE? IT IS A METAL **KITE**! BUT IT FLIES WITHOUT WINGS... WITHOUT A MOTOR!

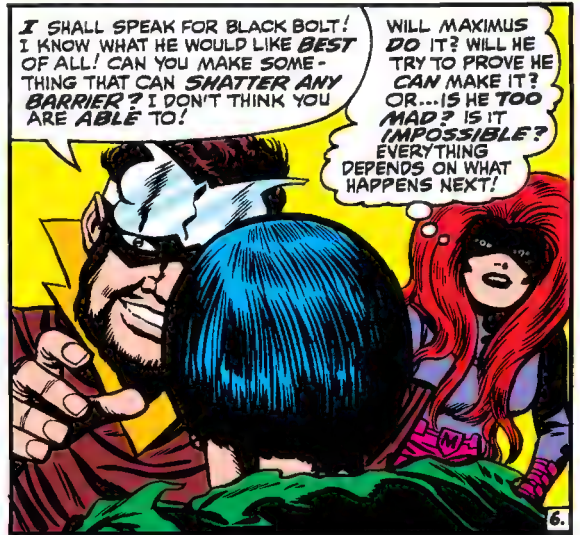
I MERELY ADAPTED IT TO A POLARIZED ANTI-GRAVITY CAPSULE! SEE HOW IT **FLIES**!



I FORGIVE YOU, **BLACK BOLT**! I FORGIVE YOU FOR TAKING MY **CROWN** AWAY FROM ME! AFTER ALL, ARE YOU NOT MY OWN **BROTHER**?

IF YOU LIKE, I WILL MAKE A METAL KITE FOR **YOU**! OR, I WILL MAKE YOU SOME **OTHER** CLEVER PLAYTHING!

OH, I FORGOT! YOU CANNOT ANSWER! YOU CANNOT **SPEAK**!



I SHALL SPEAK FOR **BLACK BOLT**! I KNOW WHAT HE WOULD LIKE **BEST** OF ALL! CAN YOU MAKE SOMETHING THAT CAN **SHATTER ANY BARRIER**? I DON'T THINK YOU ARE **ABLE** TO!

WILL **MAXIMUS** **DO** IT? WILL HE TRY TO PROVE HE CAN MAKE IT? OR... IS HE TOO **MAD**? IS IT **IMPOSSIBLE**? EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!

BUT UNFORTUNATELY, WE CAN TARRY NO LONGER WITH THE FASCINATING **INHUMANS!** FOR, BACK IN THE EERIE, EXTRAORDINARY, ELECTRONIC JUNGLE OF THE WONDERFUL **WAKANDAS** THE FABULOUS **F.F.**, TOGETHER WITH THEIR TRAVELLING COMPANION ... **JOHNNY'S CLASSMATE, WYATT WINGFOOT** ... ARE PREPARING TO TAKE LEAVE OF THEIR AMAZING HOST...

REED, DARLING... DID YOU SEE THE WONDERFUL **GIFTS** WHICH THE **BLACK PANTHER** HAD PREPARED FOR US?

IMAGINE! THE LATEST FASHIONS FROM PARIS AND ROME, HERE IN THE HEART OF THE JUNGLE!

IF MY PALTRY GIFTS FIND FAVOR IN YOUR EYES, THEN MY HEART IS HAPPY! YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELVES TO BE MY **FRIENDS**... AND THE **BLACK PANTHER** DOES NOT USE SUCH A WORD LIGHTLY!

A BOOK OF INTERNATIONAL ATHLETIC WORLD RECORDS... INCLUDING AN ENTIRE SECTION DEVOTED TO MY FATHER'S CAREER!... HOW DID HE **KNOW**?

A **SONIC FISHING POLE**, LIKE SOMETHING **TONY STARK** MIGHT HAVE INVENTED!

THE CHIEFTAIN OF THE **WAKANDAS** IS A WONDERFUL MAN, **SUE**, DARLING! HE'S AS GENEROUS AS HE IS POWERFUL... AS WARMHEARTED AS HE IS WEALTHY!

STRETCHO GETS HIMSELF A WHOLE NEW SET OF SAFARI PUDS... BUT **ME**, I GET SOME NUTTY KINDA TOY OR SOMETHIN'!

I'LL BET MONEY-BAGS IS PUTTIN' ME ON!

NO, MY GRUMBING, GREGARIOUS, GRAVEL-VOICED FRIEND... I DO NOT **PUT YOU ON**!

EXERCISE?!! THAT'S THE **ONE** THING A CRACKER LIKE ME **DON'T** NEED... BUT I AIN'T GOT THE HEART TO **TELL** 'IM THAT!

YEAH! IT'S THE CAT'S PAJAMAS! IT'LL KEEP ME OFFA THE **STREETS**, ANYHOW!

YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS THE MOST POWERFUL PORTABLE **EXERCISER** ON EARTH! IT CAN GENERATE A FORCE EQUAL TO THE PRESS OF **TEN TONS** FOR YOU TO TEST YOUR STRENGTH AGAINST!

I TRUST IT WILL AFFORD YOU MANY PLEASANT MOMENTS OF RELAXATION!

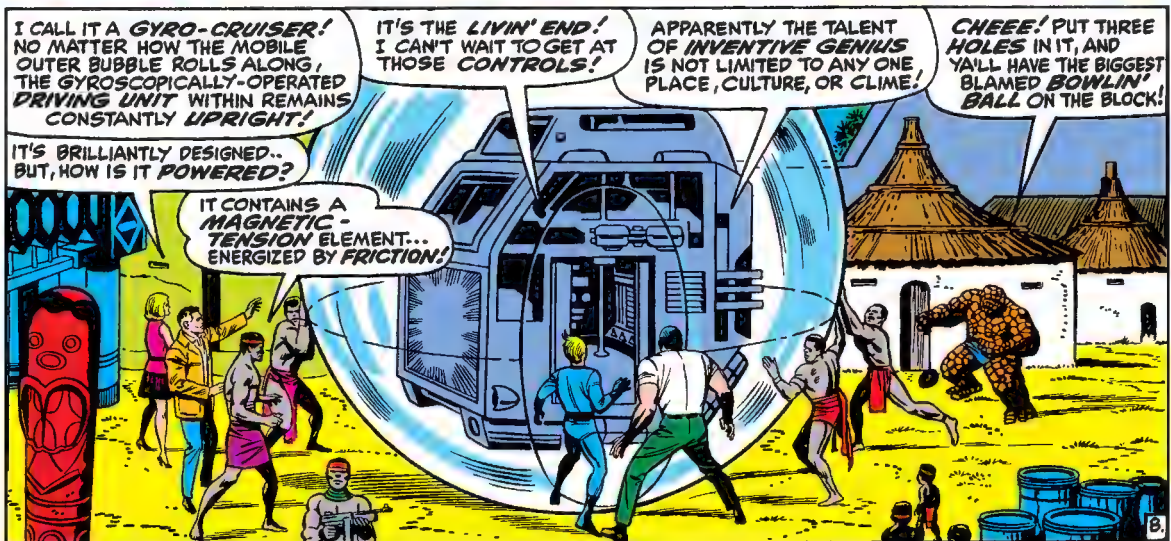
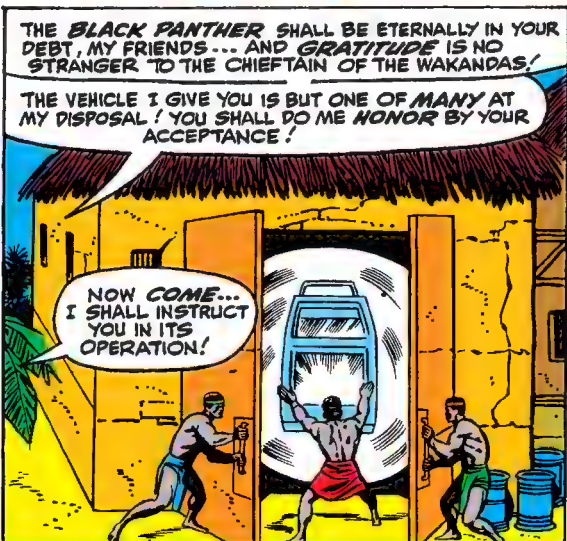
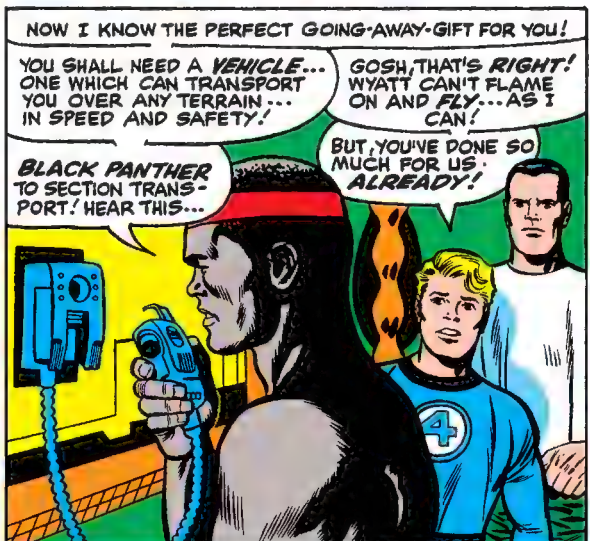
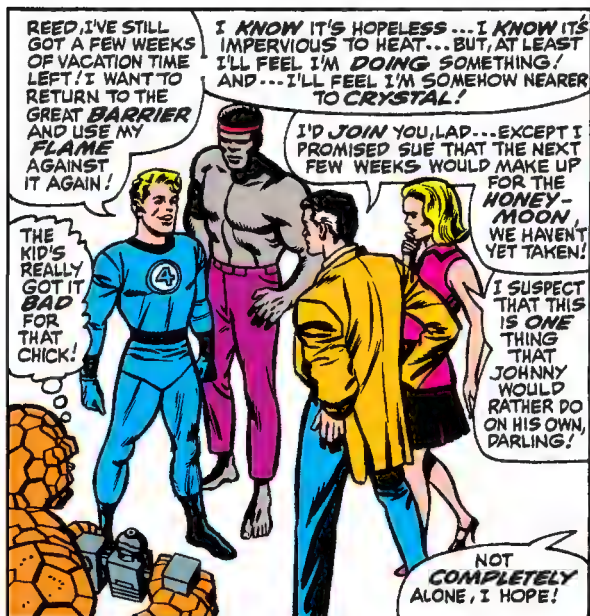
COME TO **THINK** OF IT, THIS GIZMO AIN'T **BAD**! AND IT'S CHEAPER'N VIC TANNY'S!

BUT, WHAT OF **YOU**, MY YOUNG FIREBRAND? THERE IS A **SORROW** I SEE BEHIND YOUR EYES... A **SORROW** THAT YOU CARRY WITH YOU ALWAYS!

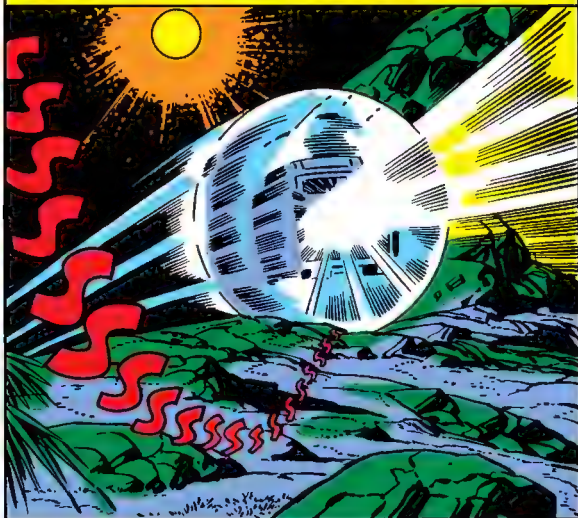
KNOW YOU THAT THE RESOURCES... THE SKILLS OF THE **BLACK PANTHER** ARE **YOURS** IF THEY ARE NEEDED!

I APPRECIATE THAT... MORE THAN I CAN **TELL** YOU! BUT THERE'S NOTHING THAT **ANYONE** CAN DO... ANYONE EXCEPT **ME**! I'M NOT GOING **BACK** WITH THE **F.F.**!

YOU'RE NOT?!!



A SHORT TIME LATER, THE DAZZLING **GYRO-CRUISER**.. WITH ITS TWO EAGER YOUNG PASSENGERS ...ROLLS SWIFTLY OUT OF THE **WAKANDA TERRITORY**, HEAD-ING FOR THE OPEN **DESERT** TO THE NORTH...



AND, WITHIN ITS VIBRATIONLESS INTERIOR ...

SO FAR, SO GOOD! I'LL CLIMB ABOVE FOR A LITTLE **SHUT-EYE** NOW, WYATT..!

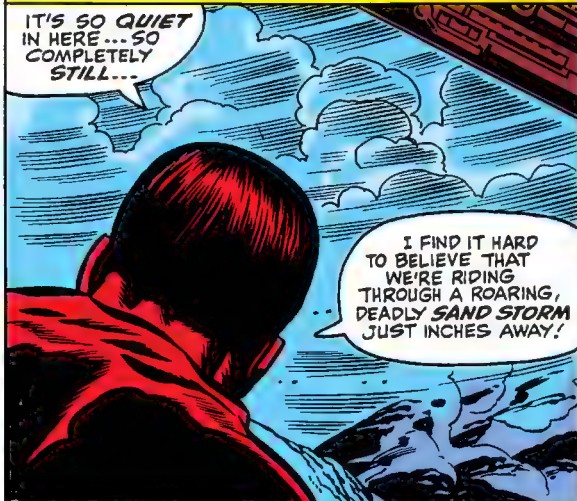
SLEEP TIGHT, JOHNNY! I'LL SPELL YOU AT THE CONTROLS TILL YOU RETURN!



THEN, AS THE MOMENTS TURN TO HOURS ...

IT'S SO QUIET IN HERE... SO COMPLETELY STILL...

I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THAT WE'RE RIDING THROUGH A ROARING, DEADLY **SAND STORM** JUST INCHES AWAY!

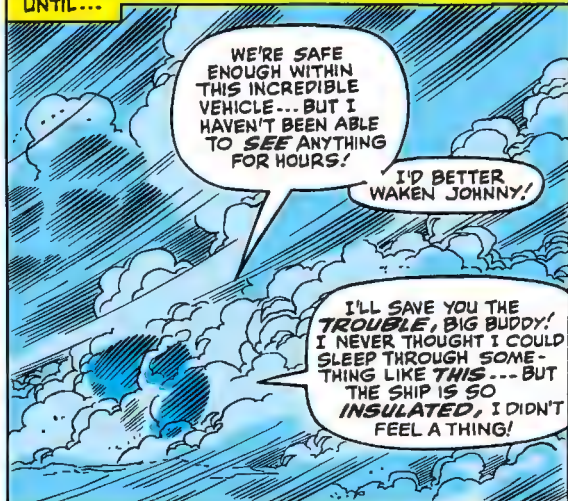


ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT, THE BLINDING STORM CONTINUES, UNTIL...

WE'RE SAFE ENOUGH WITHIN THIS INCREDIBLE VEHICLE... BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO **SEE** ANYTHING FOR HOURS!

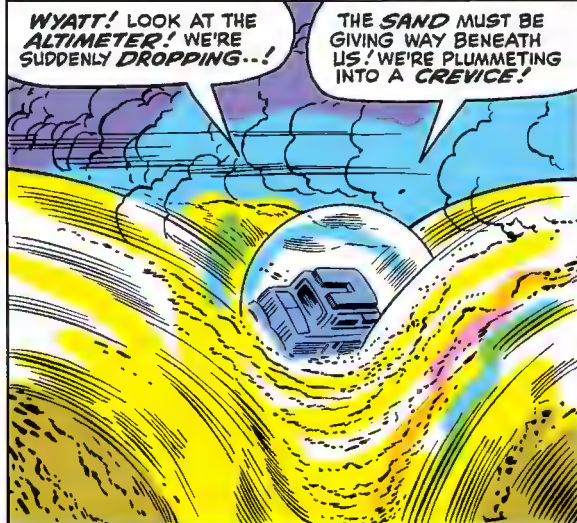
I'D BETTER WAKEN JOHNNY!

I'LL SAVE YOU THE **TROUBLE**, BIG BUDDY! I NEVER THOUGHT I COULD SLEEP THROUGH SOME-THING LIKE **THIS**... BUT THE SHIP IS SO **INSULATED**, I DIDN'T FEEL A THING!



WYATT! LOOK AT THE **ALTIMETER**! WE'RE SUDDENLY **DROPPING**...!

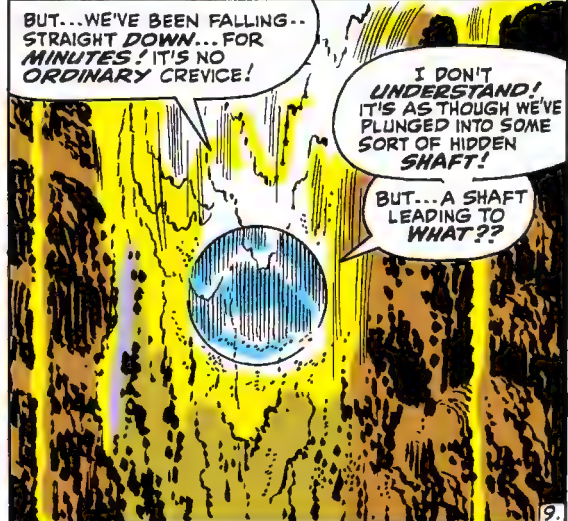
THE **SAND** MUST BE GIVING WAY BENEATH US! WE'RE PLUMMETING INTO A **CREVICE**!

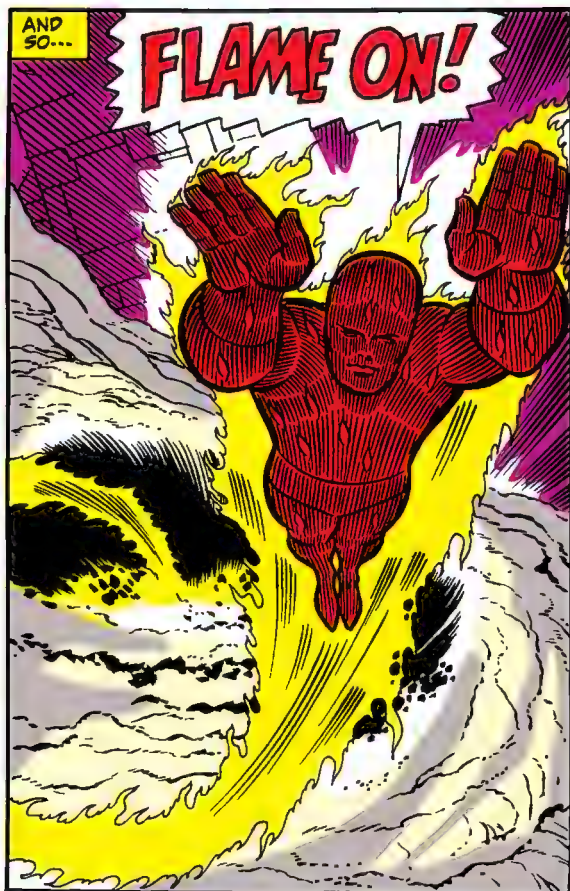
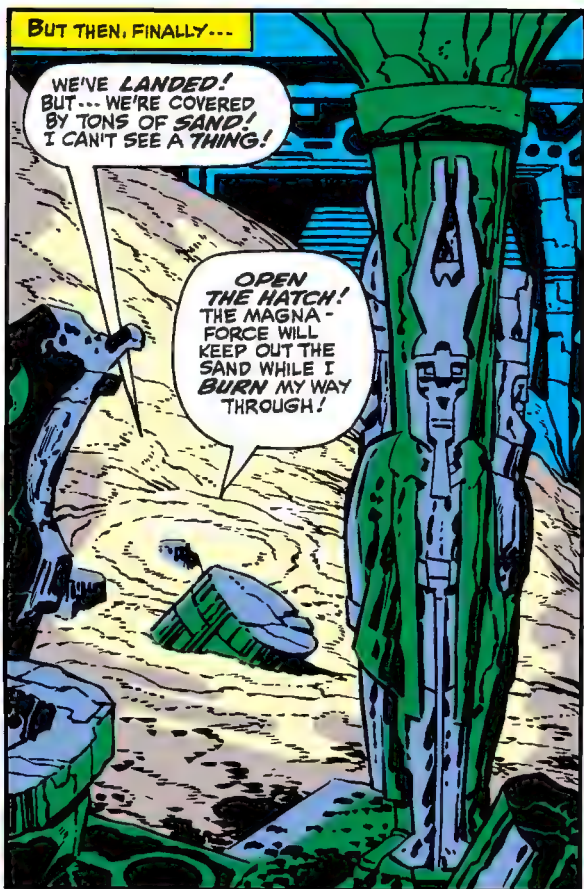


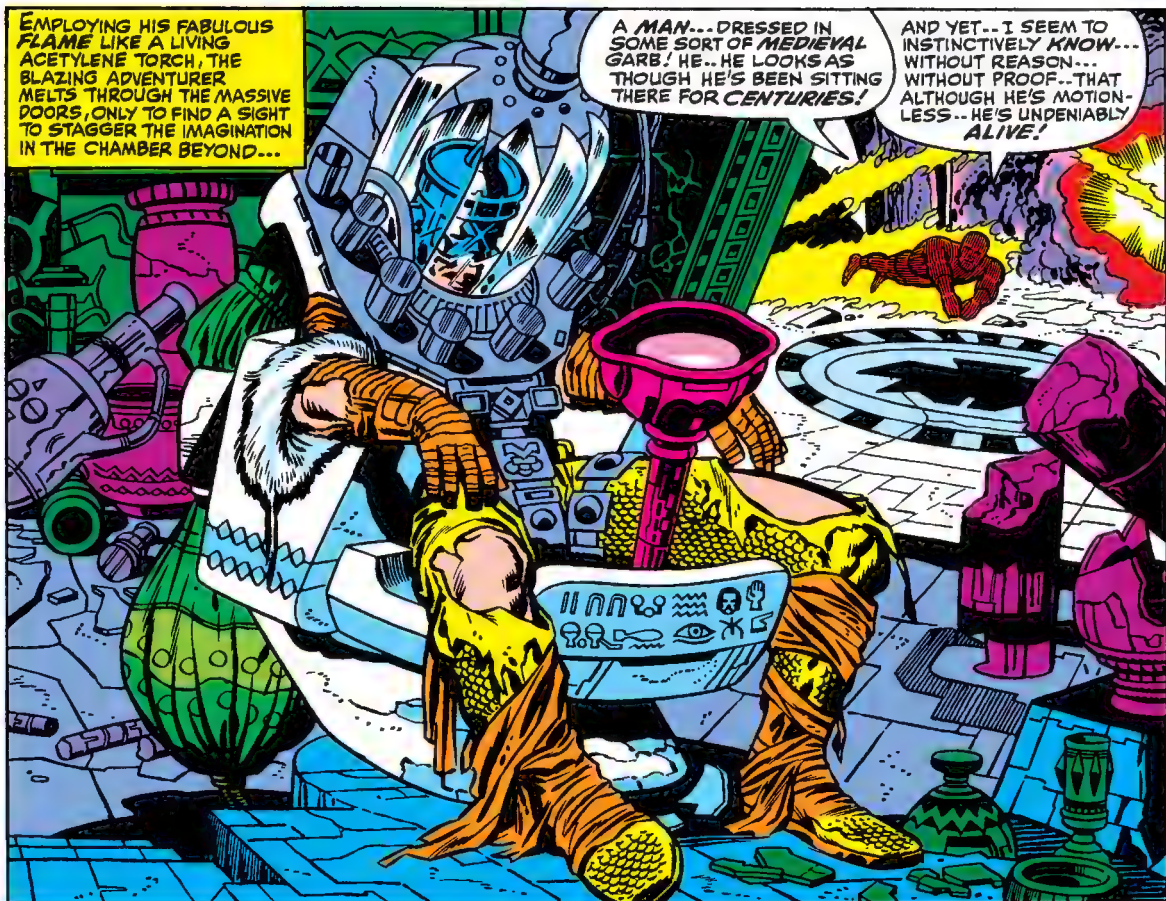
BUT...WE'VE BEEN FALLING-- STRAIGHT DOWN... FOR **MINUTES**! IT'S NO **ORDINARY** CREVICE!

I DON'T **UNDERSTAND**! IT'S AS THOUGH WE'VE PLUNGED INTO SOME SORT OF HIDDEN **SHAFT**!

BUT...A SHAFT LEADING TO **WHAT??**



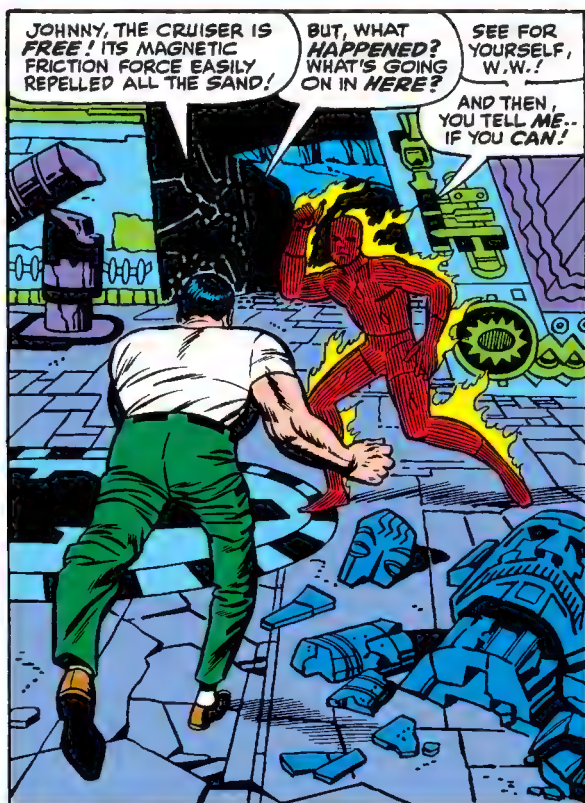




EMPLOYING HIS FABULOUS FLAME LIKE A LIVING ACETYLENE TORCH, THE BLAZING ADVENTURER MELTS THROUGH THE MASSIVE DOORS, ONLY TO FIND A SIGHT TO STAGGER THE IMAGINATION IN THE CHAMBER BEYOND...

A MAN... DRESSED IN SOME SORT OF MEDIEVAL GARB! HE... HE LOOKS AS THOUGH HE'S BEEN SITTING THERE FOR CENTURIES!

AND YET... I SEEM TO INSTINCTIVELY KNOW... WITHOUT REASON... WITHOUT PROOF... THAT ALTHOUGH HE'S MOTIONLESS... HE'S UNDENIABLY ALIVE!



JOHNNY, THE CRUISER IS FREE! ITS MAGNETIC FRICTION FORCE EASILY REPELLED ALL THE SAND!

BUT, WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT'S GOING ON IN HERE?

SEE FOR YOURSELF, W.W.!

AND THEN, YOU TELL ME... IF YOU CAN!



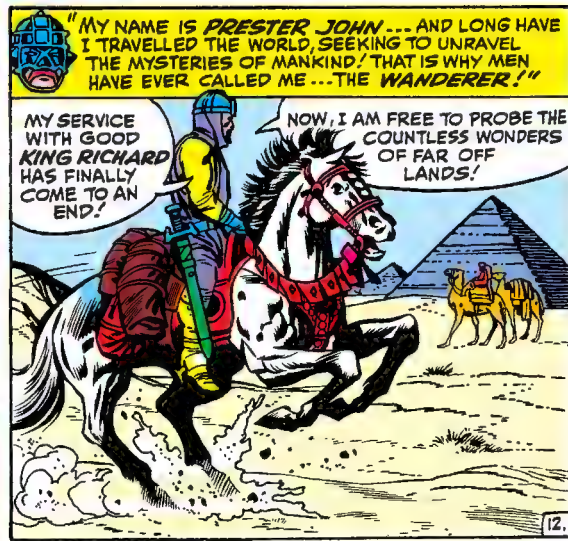
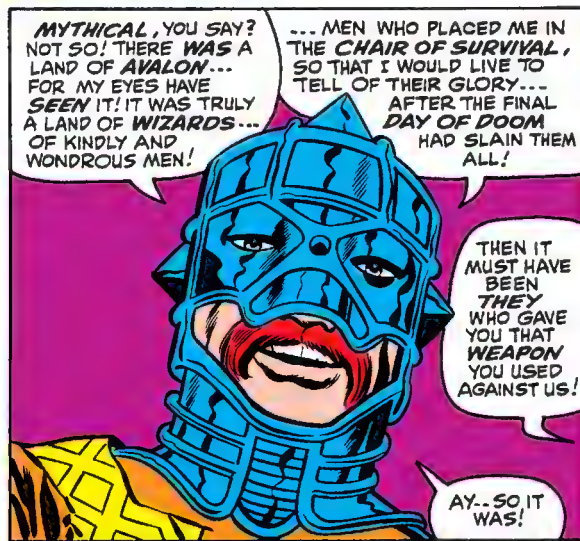
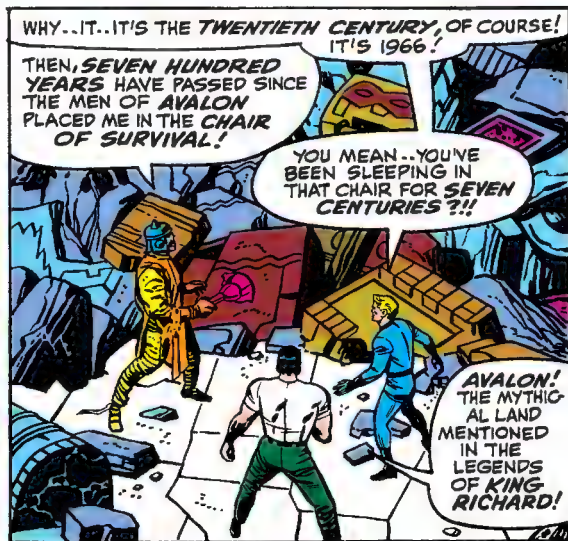
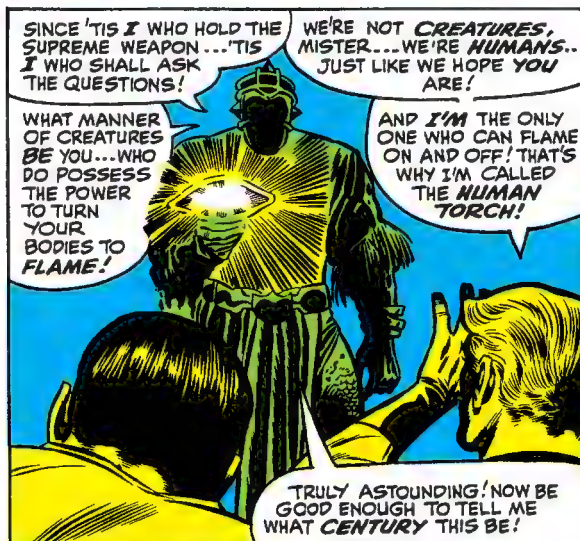
THAT MAN ... IN THE CHAIR... HE'S STARTING TO MOVE... RISING TO HIS FEET!

BUT... LOOK HOW HE'S DRESSED! WHO IS HE?

I DON'T KNOW... BUT I'VE SEEN FRIENDLIER EXPRESSIONS ON THE HULK... AND DOC DOOM!

THAT THING HE'S HOLDING ... LIKE SOME PREHISTORIC FLASHLIGHT... HE'S POINTING IT AT US! IT MIGHT BE A WEAPON! WHATT... LOOK OUT!

HE'S PRESSING A CONTROL STUD! IT STARTING TO GLOW... TO VIBRATE...



"AND, THE SIGHTS I BEHELD... THE SECRETS UPON WHICH I STUMBLERD... WERE FAR BEYOND DESCRIPTION... YEA, ALMOST BEYOND BELIEF ITSELF..."

WOVEN CLOTH... FILLED WITH A STRANGE GAS CALLED **HELIOS**... A GAS WHICH MAGICALLY RISES INTO THE AIR...

THE SKY SEEMS FILLED WITH FANTASTIC FLYING CARPETS!



"CAN I EVER FORGET THOSE LONELY MOUNTAIN PEAKS FROM WHICH I BARELY ESCAPED WITH MY LIFE... AFTER FINDING A SAVAGE RACE WHO THRIVED ONLY IN THE LAND OF ENDLESS SNOW..."

BACK, YE MURDEROUS BRUTES! THE WANDERER SHALL NOT FALL PREY TO A HALF-HUMAN BAND OF ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN!



"AND, I WONDER IF TIME HAS ERASED THE GLORY OF CATHAY... WHERE I WITNESSED THE FLIGHT OF GIANT PROJECTILES... LIKE ROARING COMETS, SOARING HIGH INTO THE HEAVENS!"



SEE HOW THEY RIDE ON THE TAILS OF DRAGON FIRE!

"EVEN MADNESS DID I ENCOUNTER... SUCH AS THE TIME I CROSSED THE ANGRY SEA ONLY TO FIND A TRIBE WHO STUDIED THE STARS... AND WHO INSANELY PROCLAIMED EARTH TO BE ROUND, LIKE SOME GREAT, SPINNING EGGSHELL!"

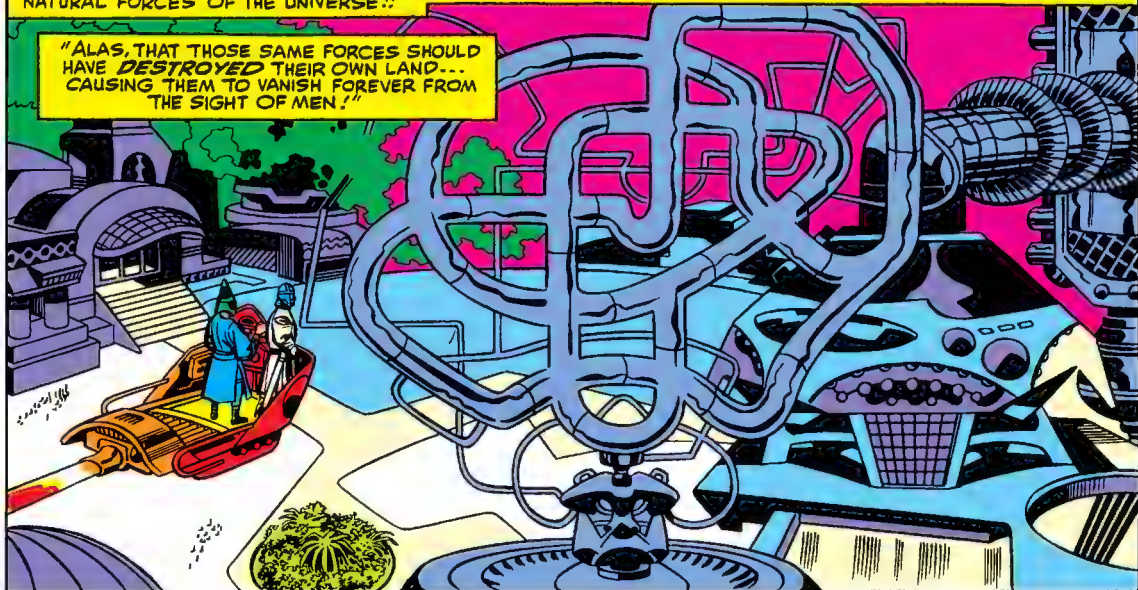
THEN, WHY DO THE MEN AT THE BOTTOM NOT WALK UPSIDE-DOWN?

BEGONE, UNBELIEVER! TIME SHALL PROVE HOW RIGHT WE BE!



"BUT, THE GREATEST TRIUMPH OF MY LIFE WAS FINDING THE FABLED ISLE OF **AVALON**! AVALON... HIDDEN REALM OF MIRACLES WITHOUT END! AVALON... WHOSE WIZARDS CREATED MIGHTY MACHINES WHICH HARNESSSED THE NATURAL FORCES OF THE UNIVERSE!"

"ALAS, THAT THOSE SAME FORCES SHOULD HAVE **DESTROYED** THEIR OWN LAND... CAUSING THEM TO VANISH FOREVER FROM THE SIGHT OF MEN!"



NOW, ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE WONDROUS AGE OF AVALON IS THIS WEAPON... KNOWN BY THE ENEMIES IT HAS CONQUERED AS... THE **EVIL EYE**!

JOHNNY, I LEARNED ABOUT **PRESTER JOHN** IN ANCIENT HISTORY! HE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE LIVED IN ABOUT THE **TWELFTH CENTURY**! IF HIS STORY IS **TRUE**...

THEN THERE REALLY WAS A LAND OF **AVALON**! BUT, WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THE **EVIL EYE**?



LOOK, **WANDERER**... MAYBE YOUR STORY IS TRUE... BUT DON'T POINT THAT **EYE GIZMO** AT US AGAIN! A BOLT OF **FLAME**... AT MY FEET!

WE'RE NOT EXACTLY HELPLESS OURSELVES!



IN ALL MY TRAVELS I HAVE SEEN NO POWER MORE **AWESOME** THAN YOURS!

BUT STILL, IT PALES INTO **NOTHINGNESS** BESIDES THE MIND-STAGGERING IMPACT OF THE **EVIL EYE**!



WITH JUST **ONE** SWIFT BLAST.. HE CREATED A **BOTTOMLESS CAVERN** IN THE ROCKY FLOOR BENEATH US!

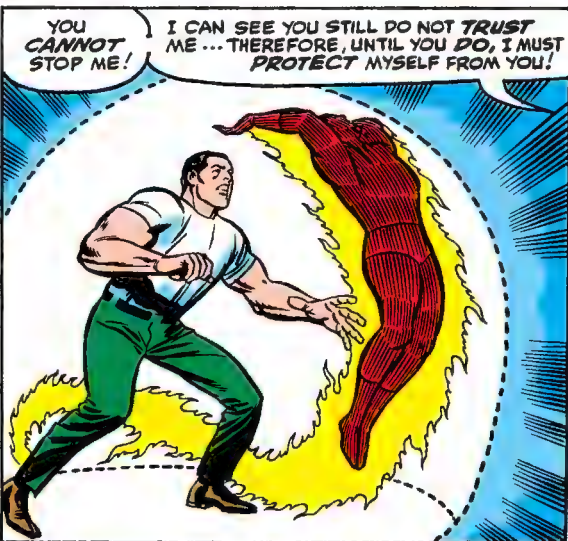
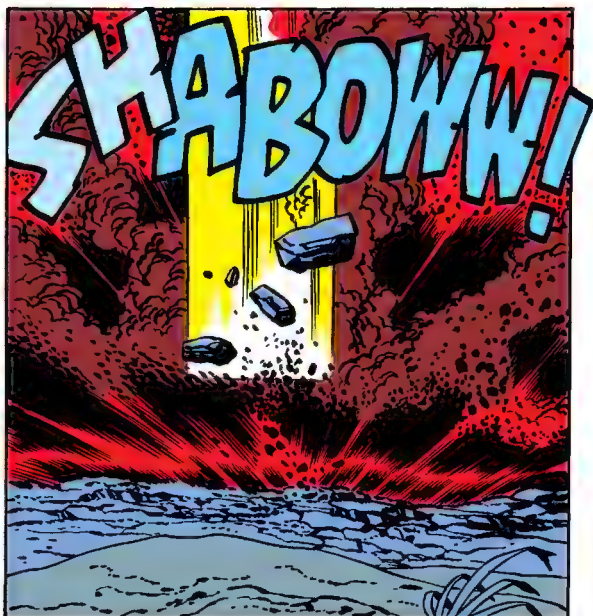
THAT IS AS **NAUGHT** TO THE FURTHER DEEDS I CAN PERFORM!





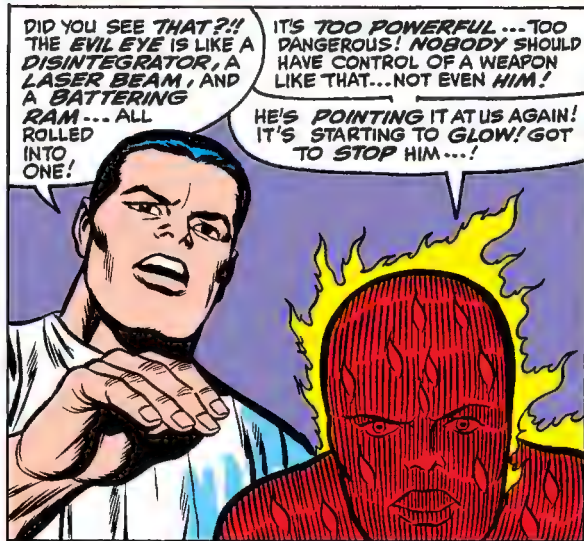
HE'S AIMING IT UP...TOWARDS THE SURFACE!

IT'S SMASHING THROUGH EVERY OBSTACLE LIKE A CANNONBALL PIERCING A PAPER BAG!



YOU CANNOT STOP ME!

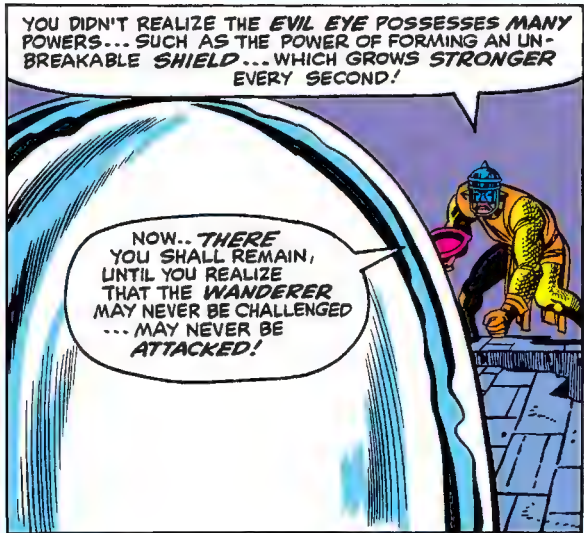
I CAN SEE YOU STILL DO NOT TRUST ME ... THEREFORE, UNTIL YOU DO, I MUST PROTECT MYSELF FROM YOU!



DID YOU SEE THAT?!! THE EVIL EYE IS LIKE A DISINTEGRATOR, A LASER BEAM, AND A BATTERING RAM... ALL ROLLED INTO ONE!

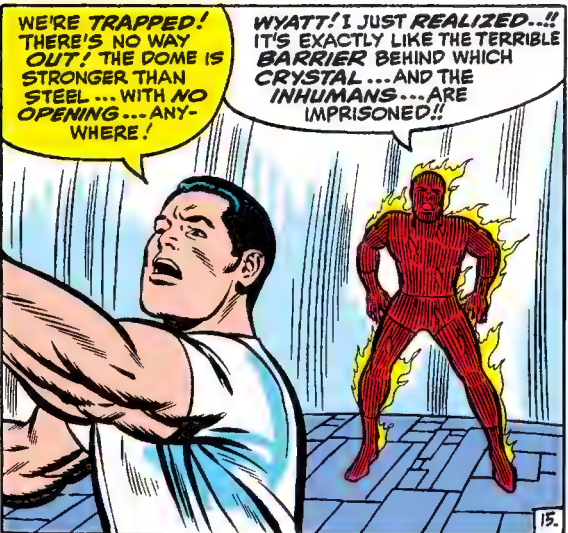
IT'S TOO POWERFUL... TOO DANGEROUS! NOBODY SHOULD HAVE CONTROL OF A WEAPON LIKE THAT... NOT EVEN HIM!

HE'S POINTING IT AT US AGAIN! IT'S STARTING TO GLOW! GOT TO STOP HIM...!



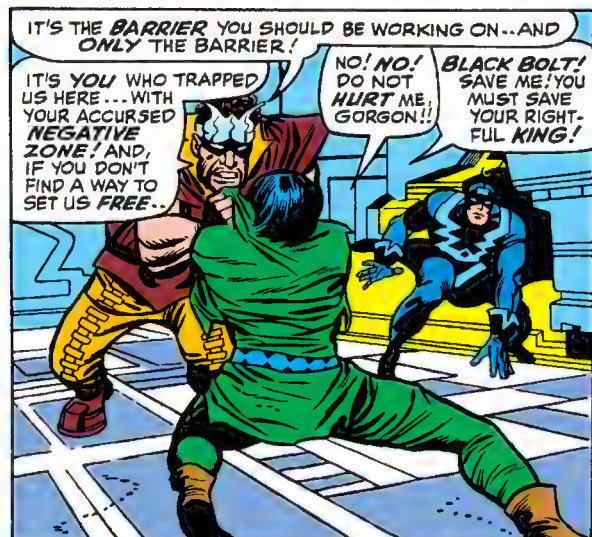
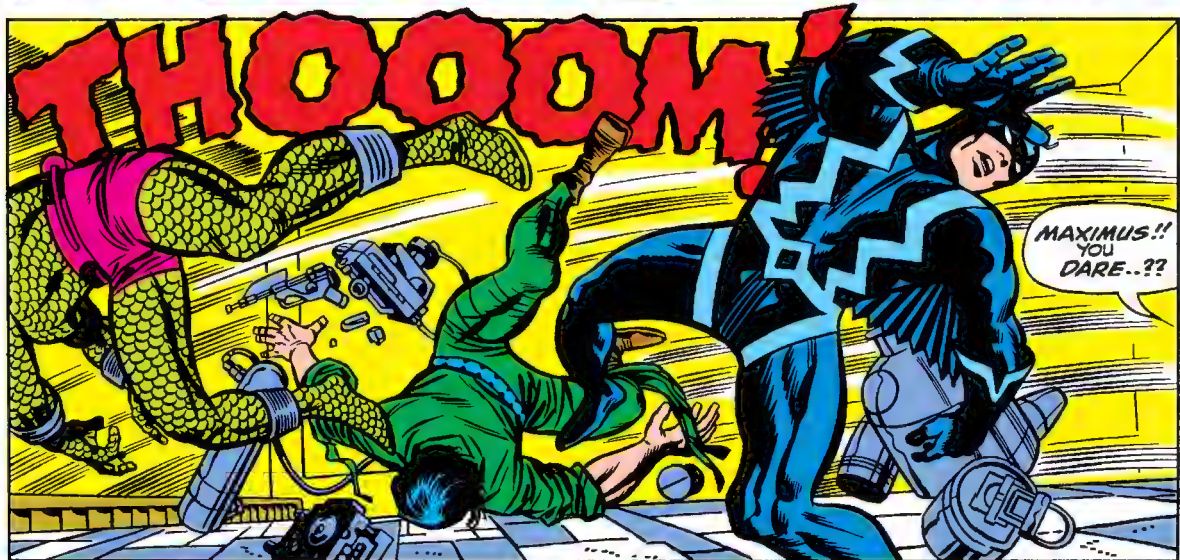
YOU DIDN'T REALIZE THE EVIL EYE POSSESSES MANY POWERS... SUCH AS THE POWER OF FORMING AN UNBREAKABLE SHIELD... WHICH GROWS STRONGER EVERY SECOND!

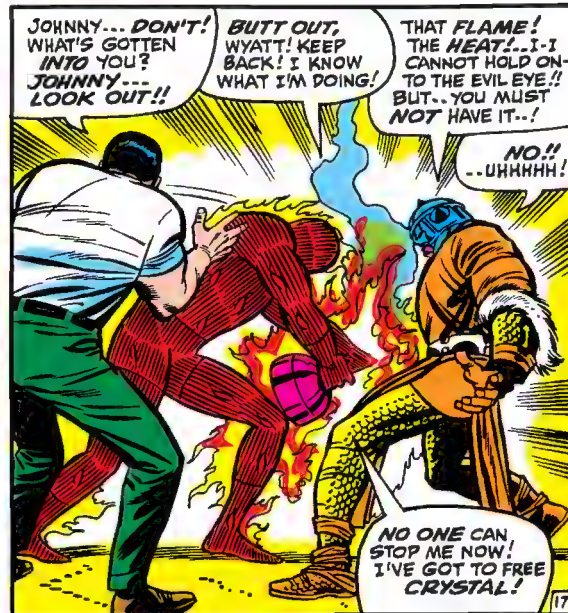
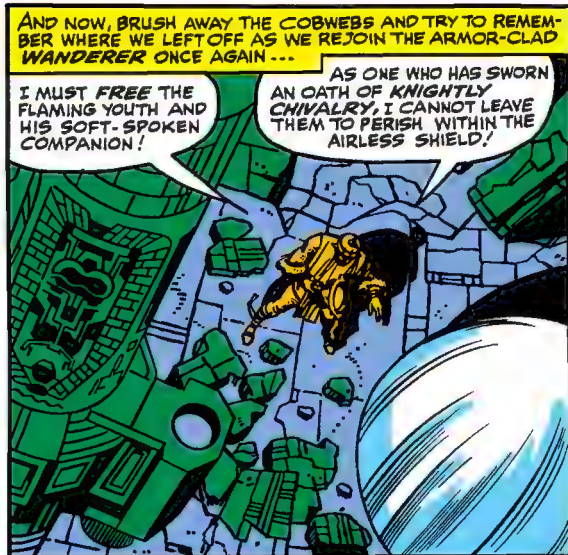
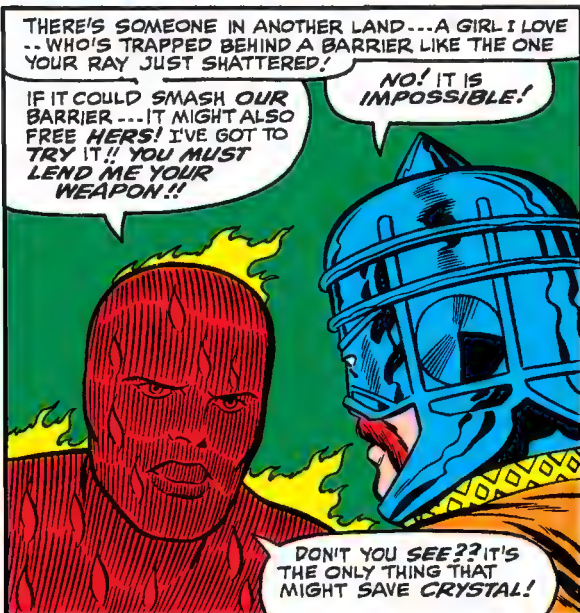
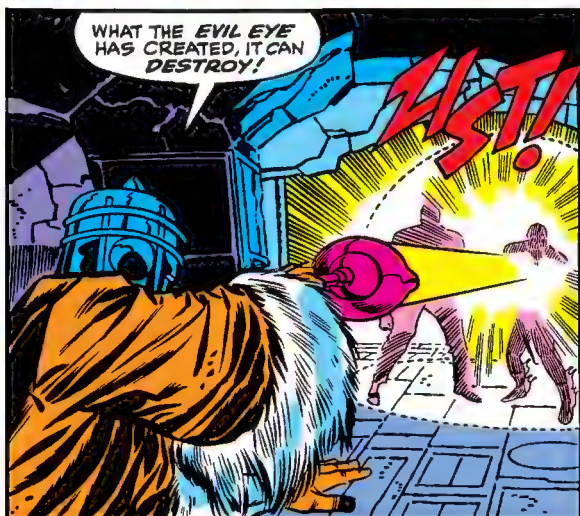
NOW... THERE YOU SHALL REMAIN, UNTIL YOU REALIZE THAT THE WANDERER MAY NEVER BE CHALLENGED ... MAY NEVER BE ATTACKED!

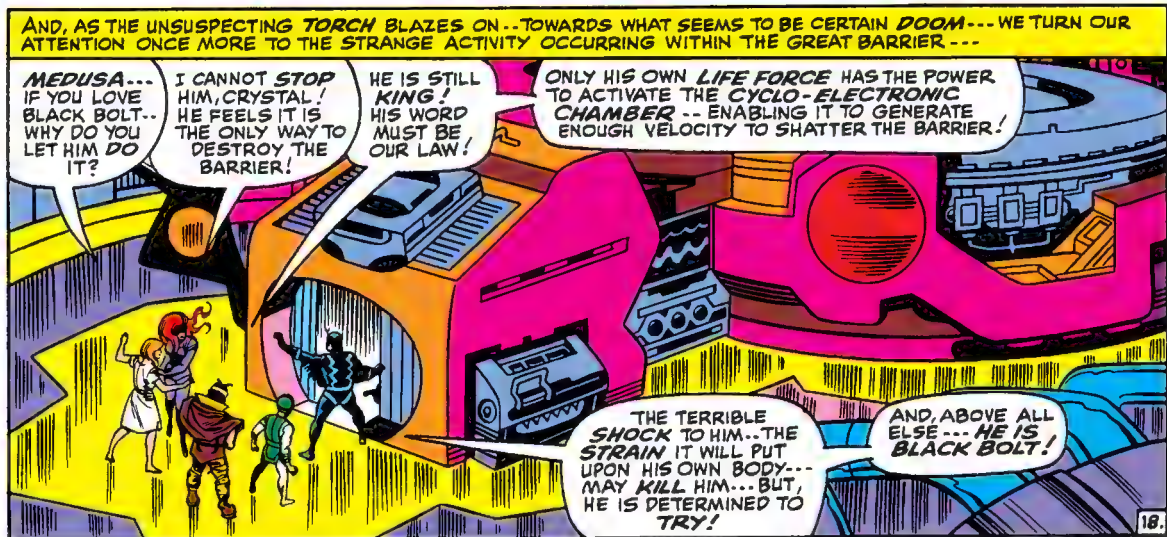
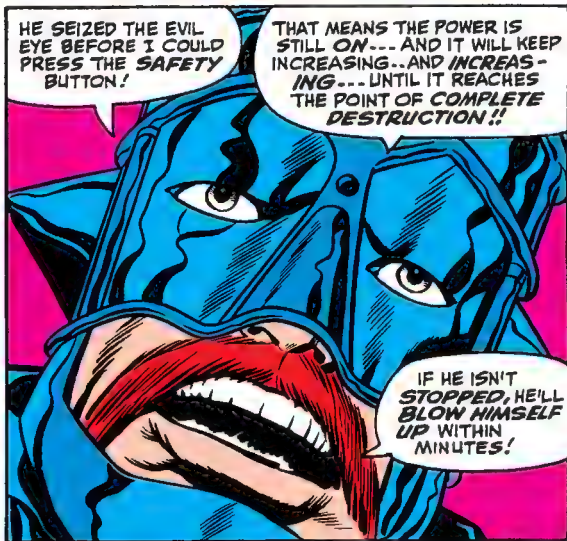
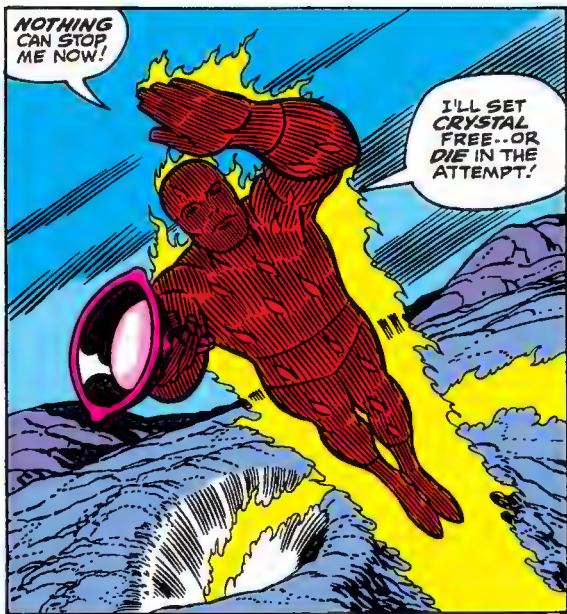
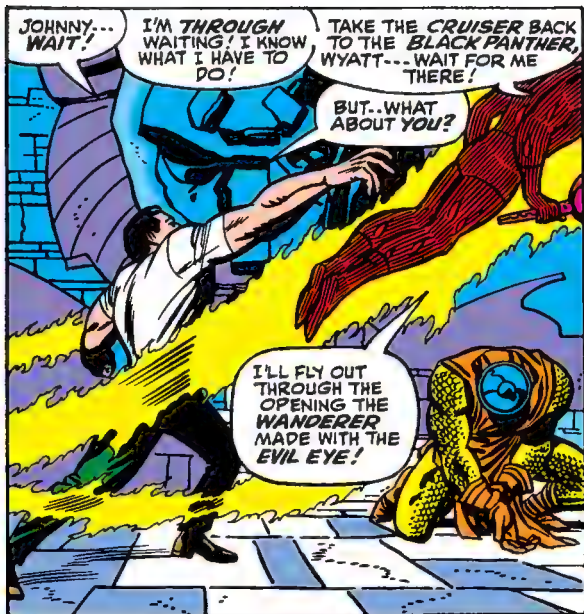


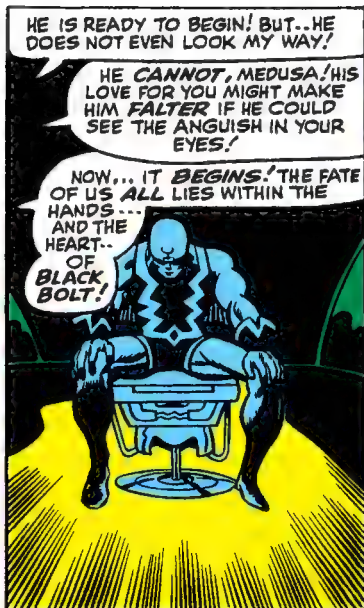
WE'RE TRAPPED! THERE'S NO WAY OUT! THE DOME IS STRONGER THAN STEEL ... WITH NO OPENING ... ANYWHERE!

WYATT! I JUST REALIZED...!! IT'S EXACTLY LIKE THE TERRIBLE BARRIER BEHIND WHICH CRYSTAL ... AND THE INHUMANS ... ARE IMPRISONED!!









HE IS READY TO BEGIN! BUT...HE DOES NOT EVEN LOOK MY WAY!

HE CANNOT, MEDUSA/HIS LOVE FOR YOU MIGHT MAKE HIM **FALTER** IF HE COULD SEE THE ANGUISH IN YOUR EYES!

NOW... IT **BEGINS**! THE FATE OF US ALL LIES WITHIN THE HANDS... AND THE HEART... OF **BLACK BOLT**!



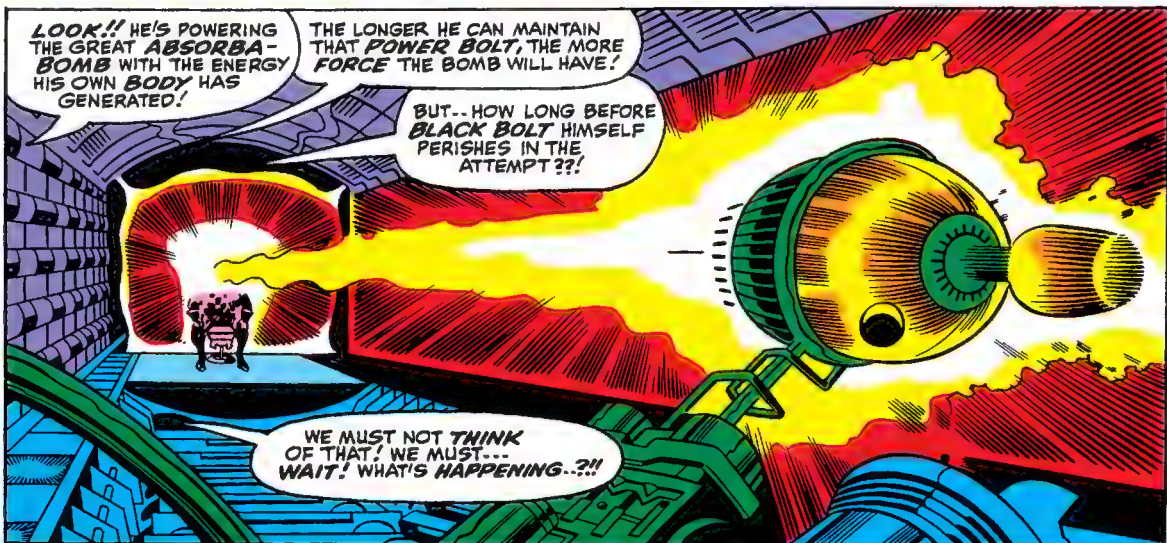
THOSE **SPARKS**!! THAT SUDDEN BURST OF INDESCRIBABLE **ENERGY**... VISIBLE TO OUR OWN NAKED EYES...

HE BUILDS UP THE **ELECTRONS**... WHICH GIVE HIM HIS **POWER**...



NEVER BEFORE HAS ONE LIVING BEING GENERATED SUCH **ENERGY**!! EVEN HE CANNOT STAND MUCH **MORE**!!

STAND BACK! HE'S READY TO **ACT**..!



LOOK!! HE'S POWERING THE GREAT **ABSORBA-BOMB** WITH THE ENERGY HIS OWN **BODY** HAS GENERATED!

THE LONGER HE CAN MAINTAIN THAT **POWER BOLT**, THE MORE **FORCE** THE BOMB WILL HAVE!

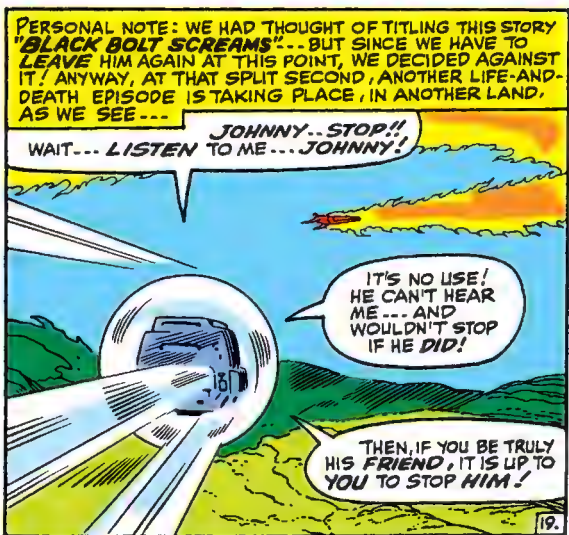
BUT...HOW LONG BEFORE **BLACK BOLT** HIMSELF PERISHES IN THE ATTEMPT??!

WE MUST NOT **THINK** OF THAT! WE MUST... **WAIT**! WHAT'S HAPPENING...?!!



THE BUILT-UP **PRESSURE** IS MORE THAN HE CAN BEAR!

LISTEN!! FOR THE FIRST TIME... SINCE THE **CATASTROPHE**... HE'S MAKING A SOUND...HE'S **SCREAMING!!**

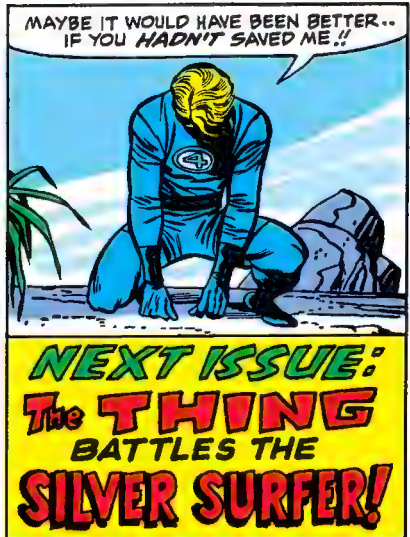
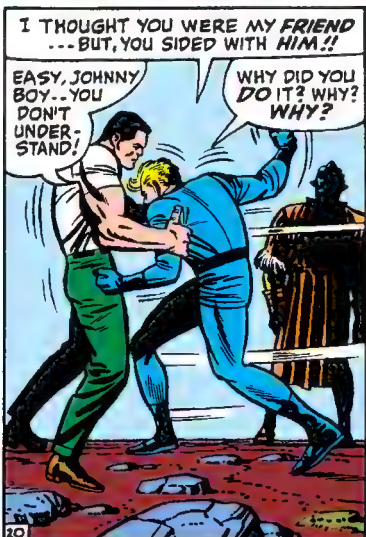
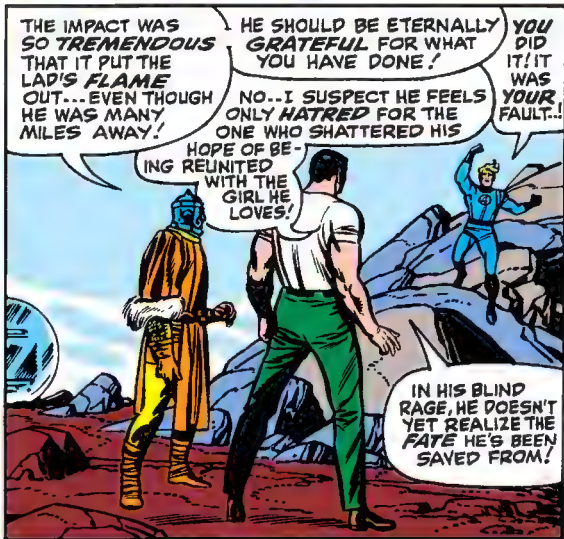
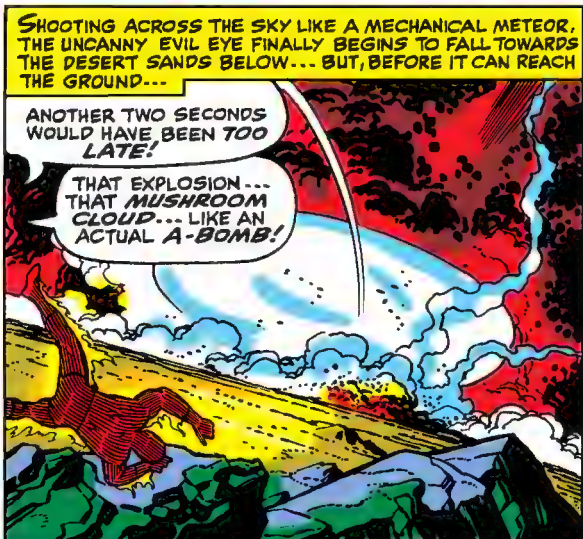
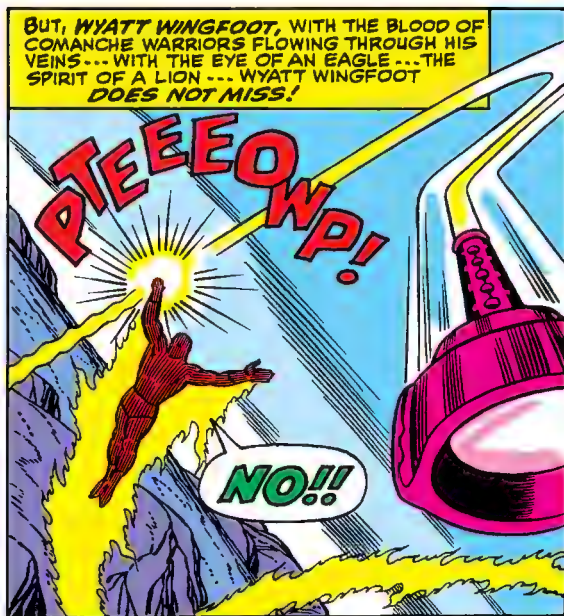


PERSONAL NOTE: WE HAD THOUGHT OF TITLING THIS STORY "**BLACK BOLT SCREAMS**"... BUT SINCE WE HAVE TO LEAVE HIM AGAIN AT THIS POINT, WE DECIDED AGAINST IT! ANYWAY, AT THAT SPLIT SECOND, ANOTHER LIFE-AND-DEATH EPISODE IS TAKING PLACE, IN ANOTHER LAND, AS WE SEE...

JOHNNY...STOP!! WAIT... **LISTEN** TO ME...**JOHNNY!!**

IT'S NO USE! HE CAN'T HEAR ME... AND WOULDN'T STOP IF HE **DID**!

THEN, IF YOU BE TRULY HIS **FRIEND**, IT IS UP TO YOU TO STOP HIM!



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COMICS
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Fantastic FOUR

FEATURING: THE
PEERLESS POWER
OF
The **SILVER
SURFER!**

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

12¢ 55
OCT



SEE A RAGING, FIGHTING-MAD **THING** LEAP INTO ACTION...

"WHEN STRIKES THE SILVER SURFER!"

LEAVING THE **HUMAN TORCH** AND **WYATT WINGFOOT** BEHIND IN THE NEAR EAST TO SEARCH FOR THE TRAPPED **INHUMANS**, **REED RICHARDS** AND HIS LOVELY WIFE **SUE** RETURN TO F.F. HEADQUARTERS, ACCOMPANIED BY THE EVER-LOVIN' BLUE-EYED **THING**! ---AND NOW, AS THE CURTAIN RISES, AND THE HOUSE LIGHTS DIM, REED SPEAKS---

ALL SECURITY UNITS REGISTER **POSITIVE**, HONEY. NO ATTACKS HAVE BEEN MADE IN OUR ABSENCE!

THAT'S **WONDERFUL**, DARLING! WITH NO NEW **DANGERS** IN SIGHT, WE CAN **CONTINUE** OUR HONEYMOON!

SINCE YOU TWO DON'T EXACTLY NEED NO **CHAPERONE**, I'M CUTTIN' OUT FER A WHILE!

WAIT'LL **ALICIA** HEARS THAT HER LUMPY LOVER-BOY'S BACK IN TOWN!

HEY!! WHY DON'T SHE **ANSWER??**

SCRIPTED WITH A SMILE BY:
STAN (THE MAN) LEE

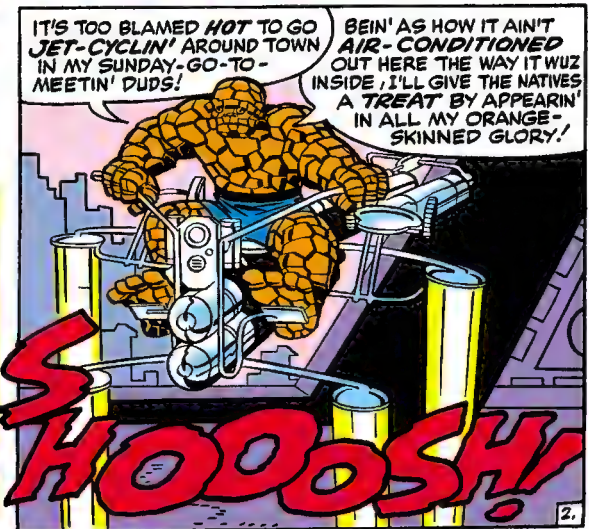
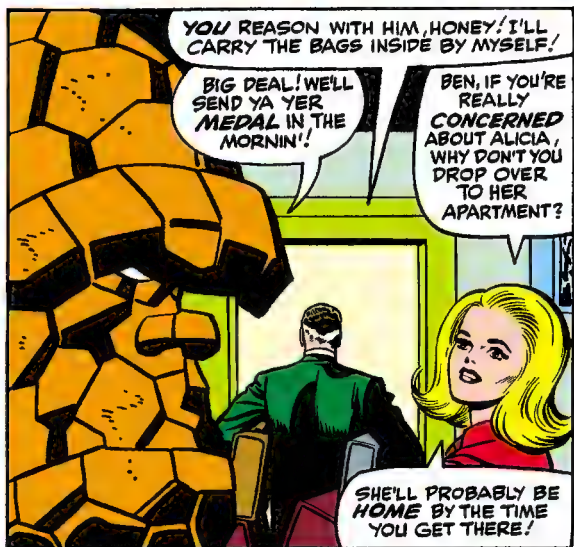
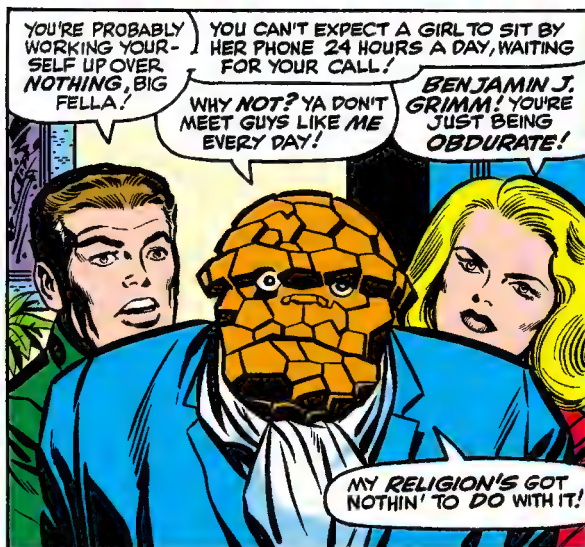
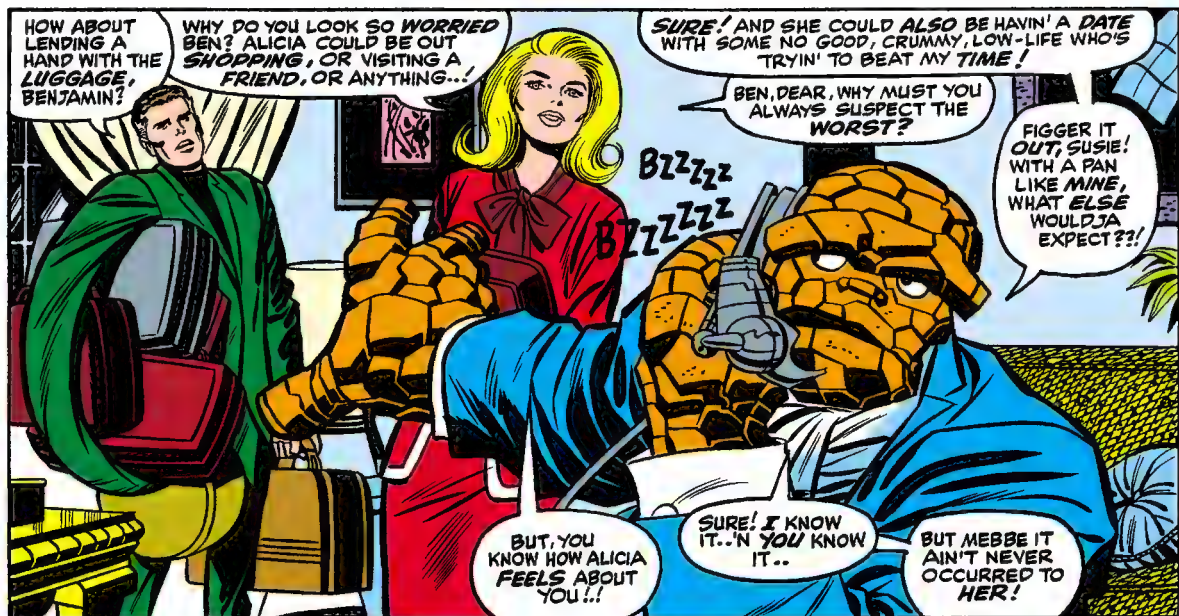
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JACK (KING) KIRBY

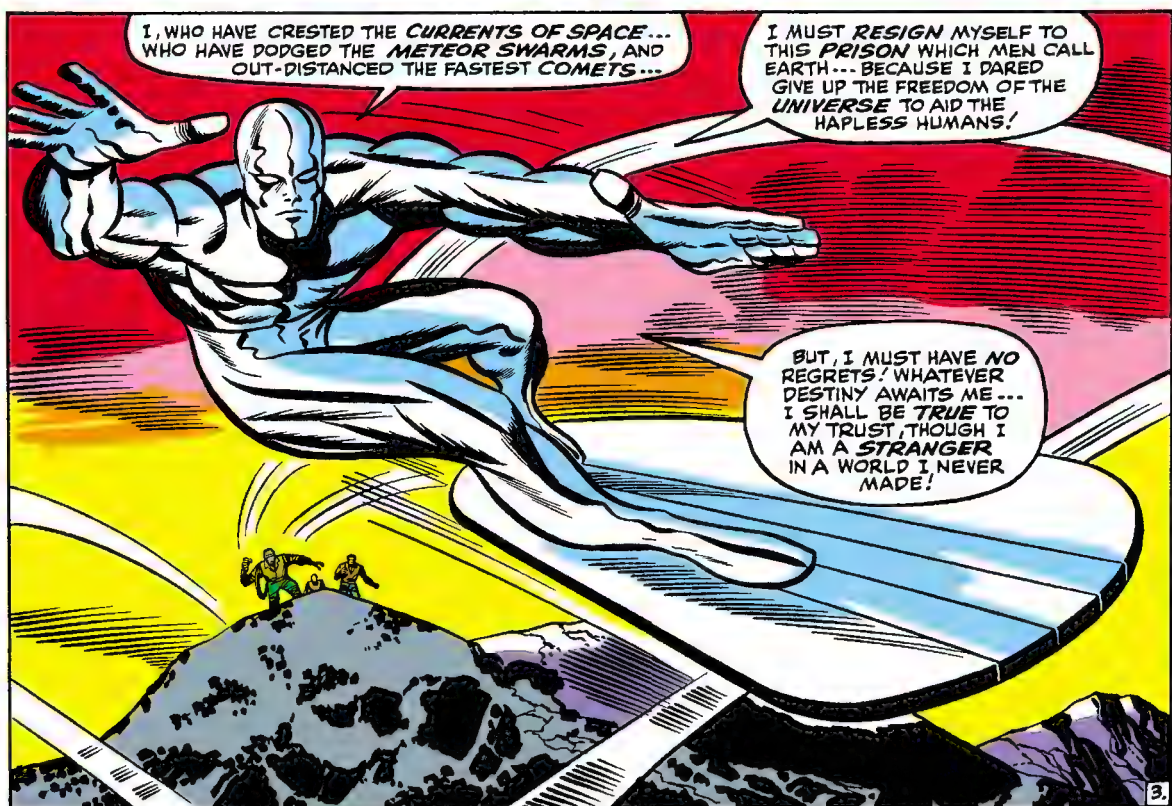
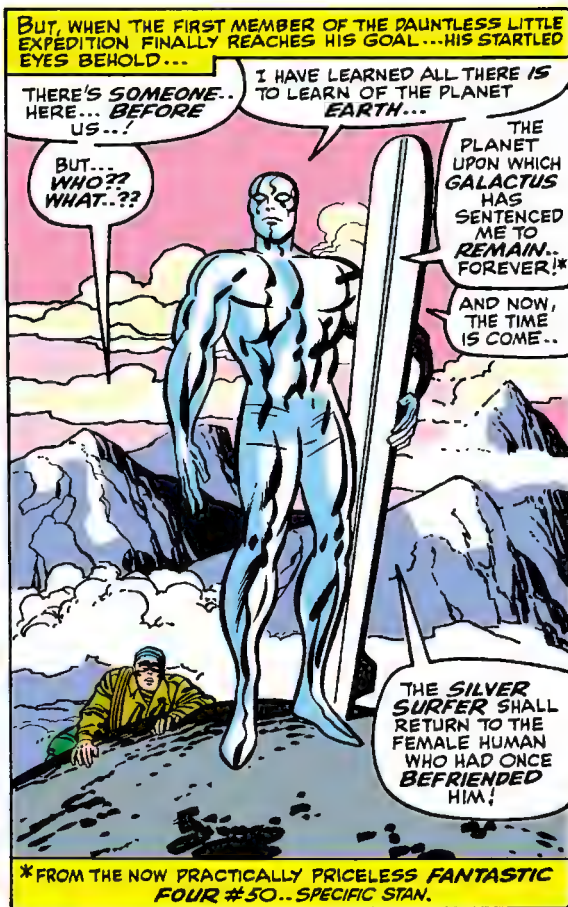
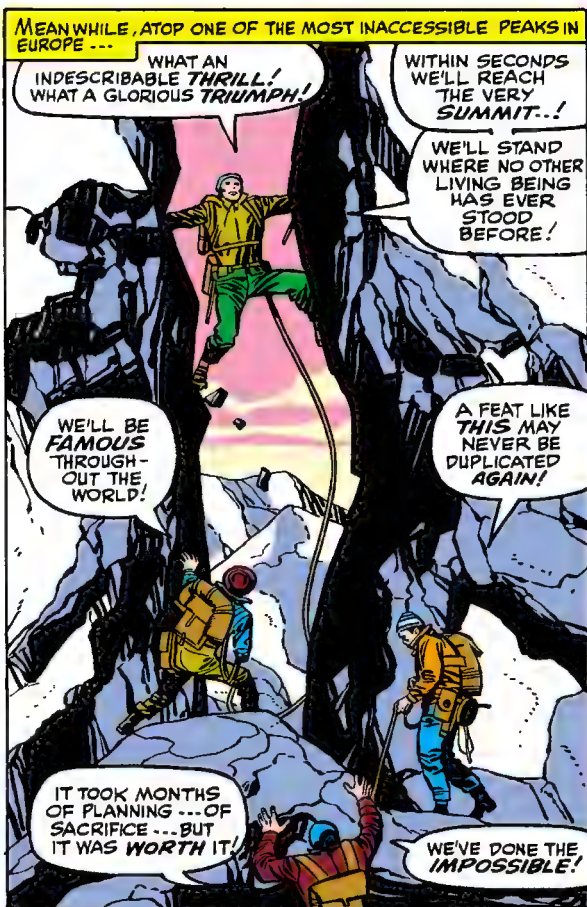
DELINEATED WITH A DIGNITY BY:
JOVIAL JOEY SINNOTT

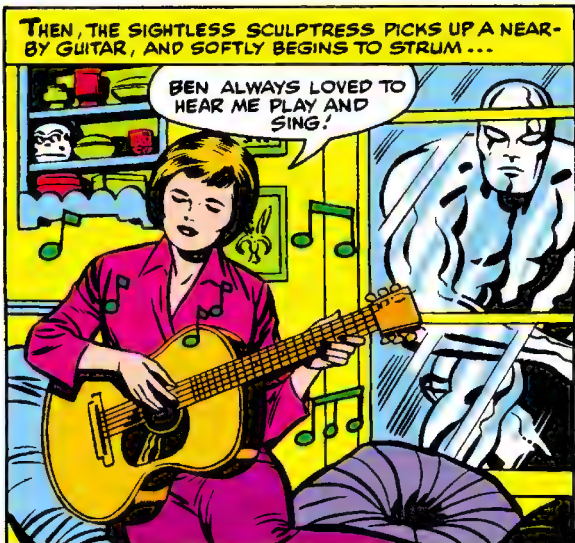
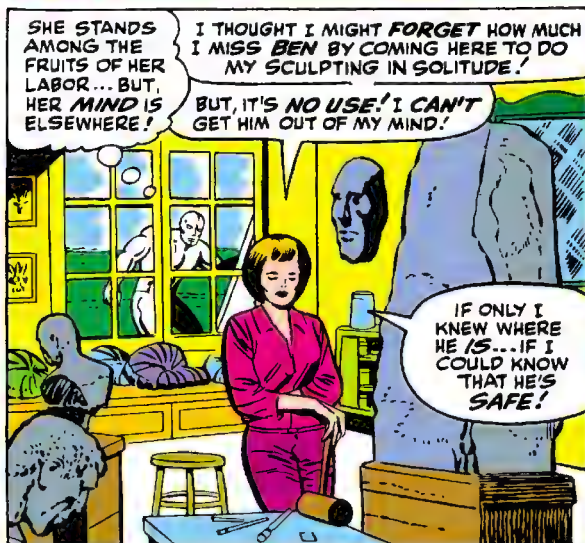
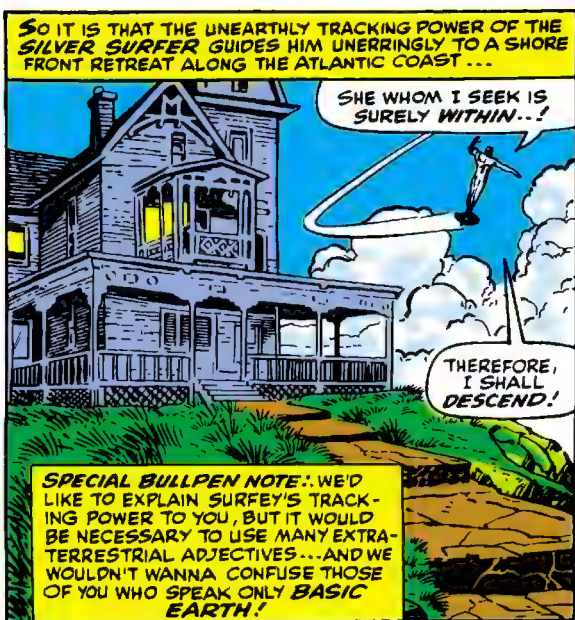
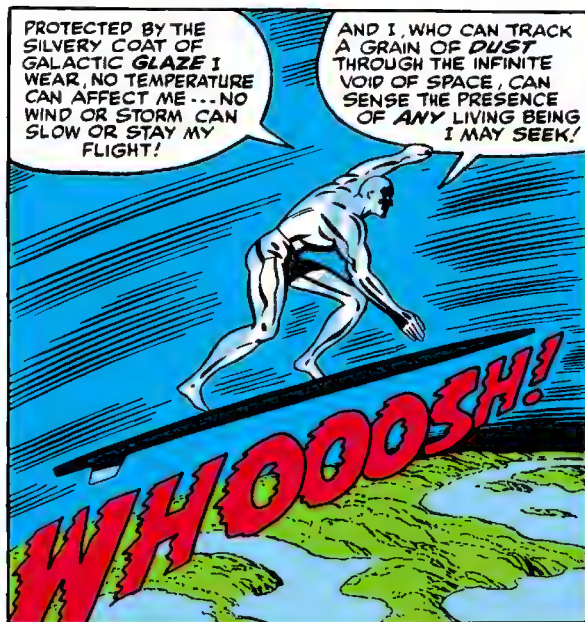
LETTERED WITH A LILT BY:
SWINGIN' SAMMY ROSEN

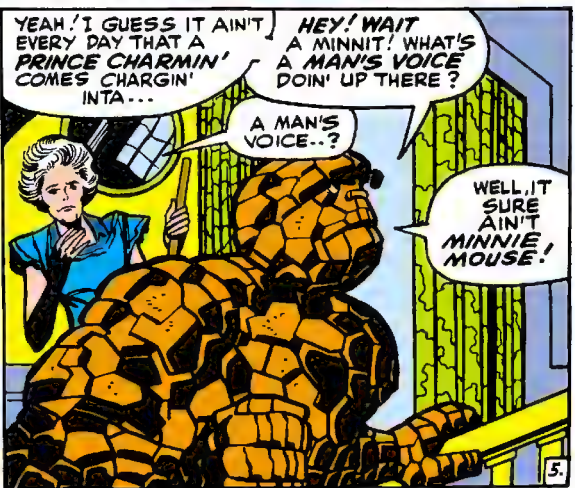
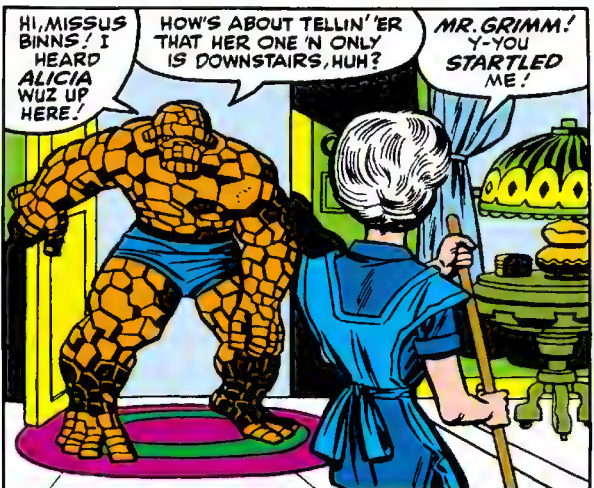
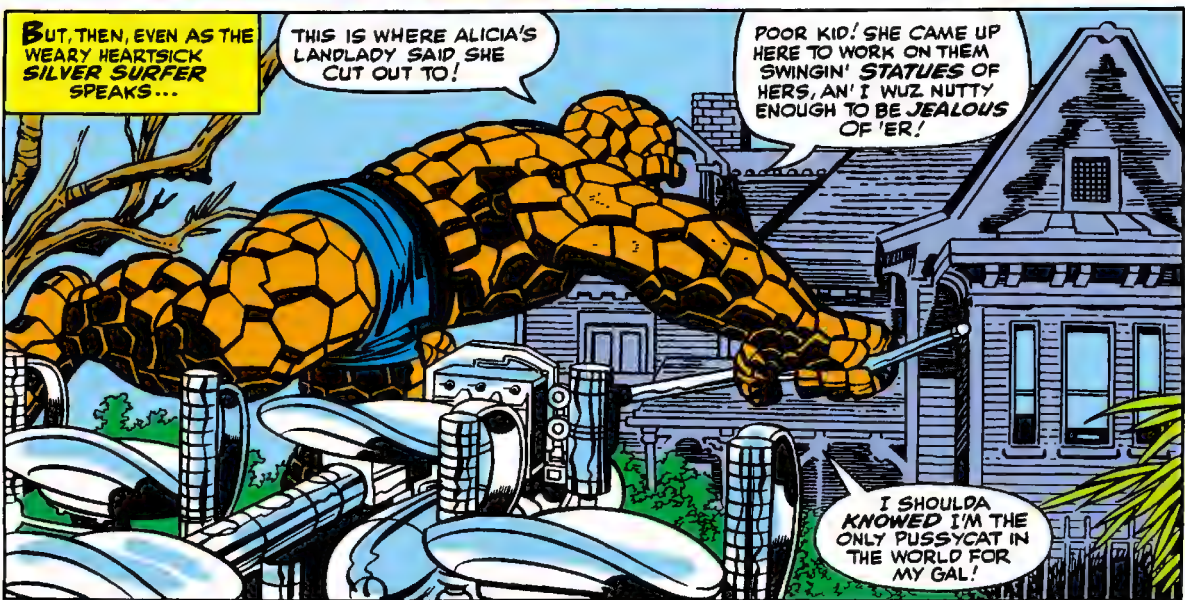
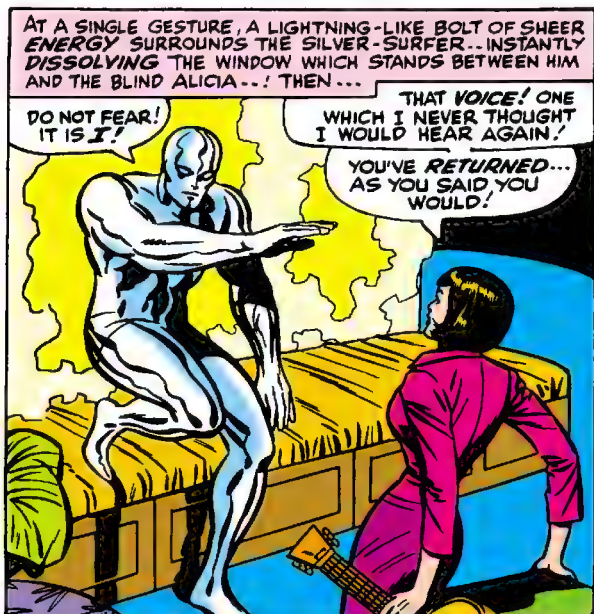
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HONEST IRVING FORBUSH

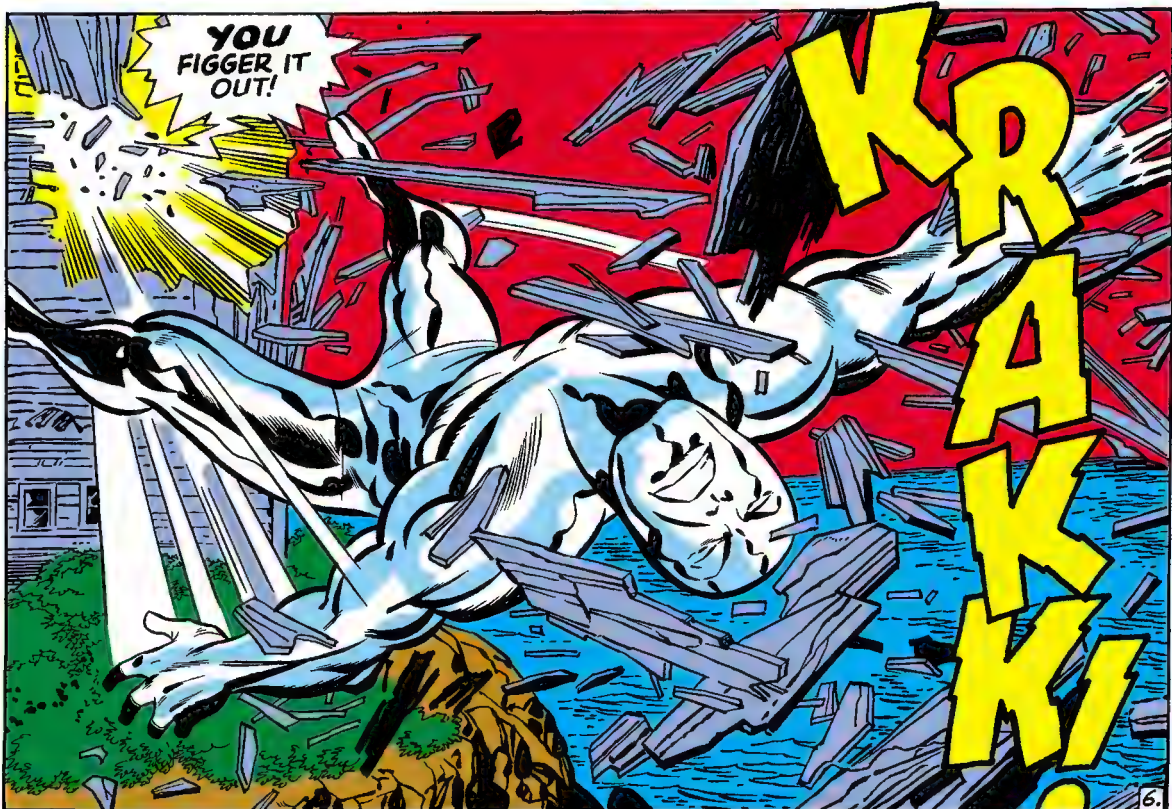
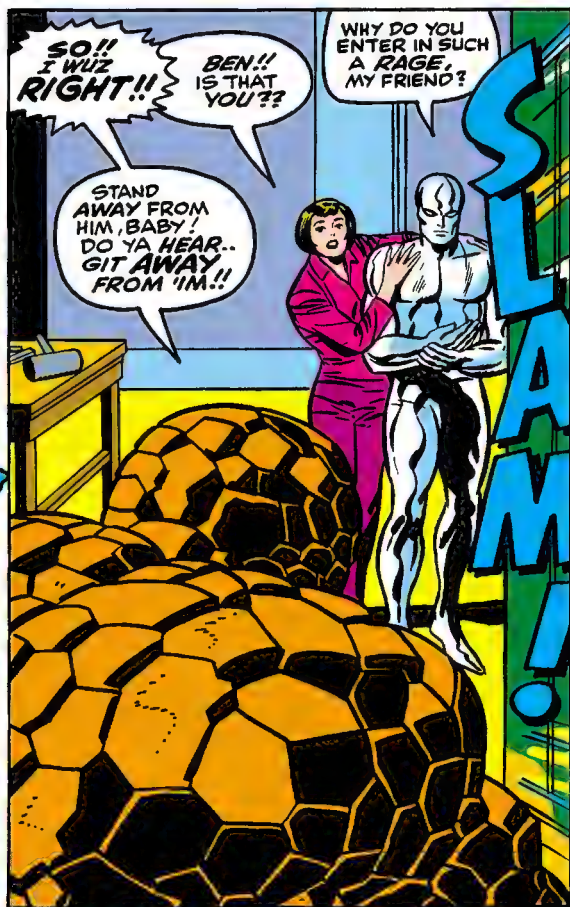
**CLIK!
KLAK!**

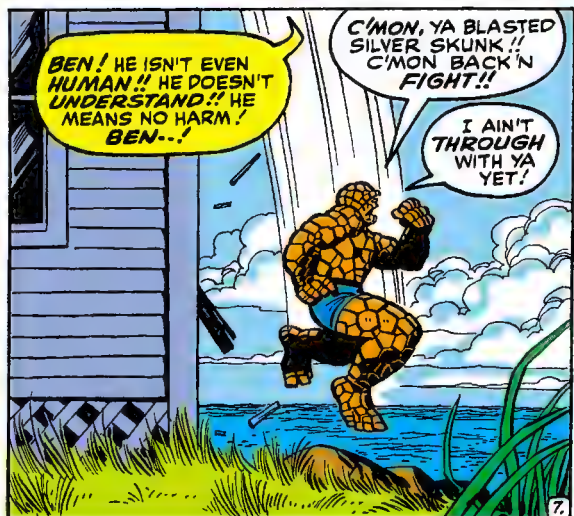
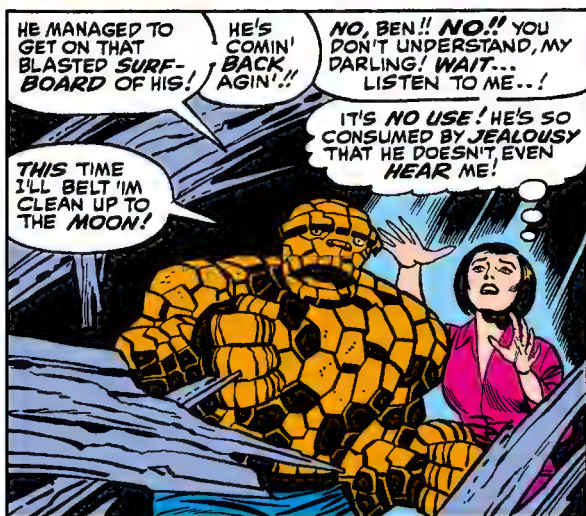
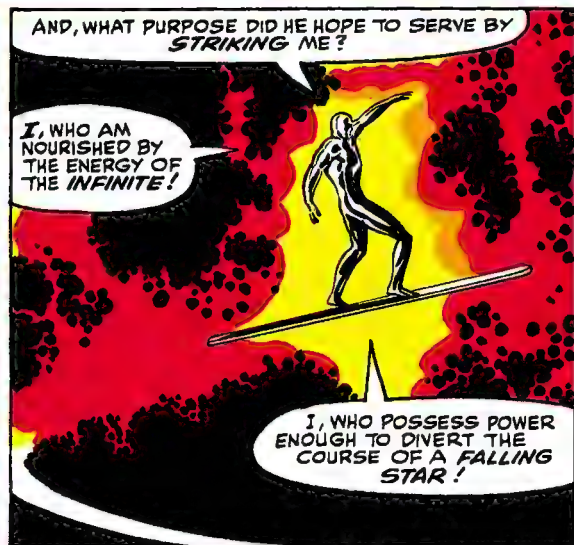
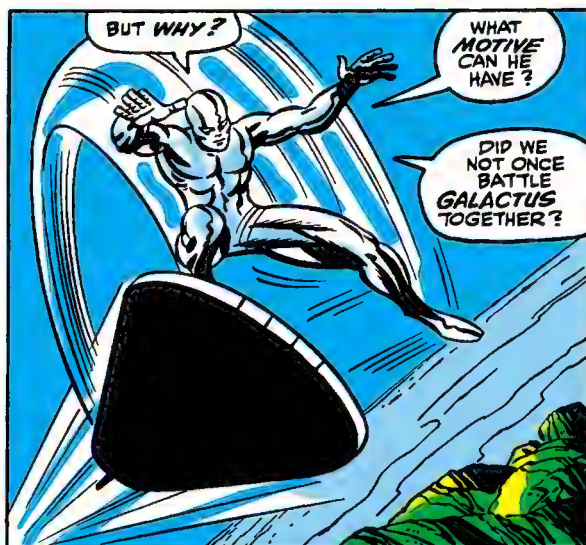
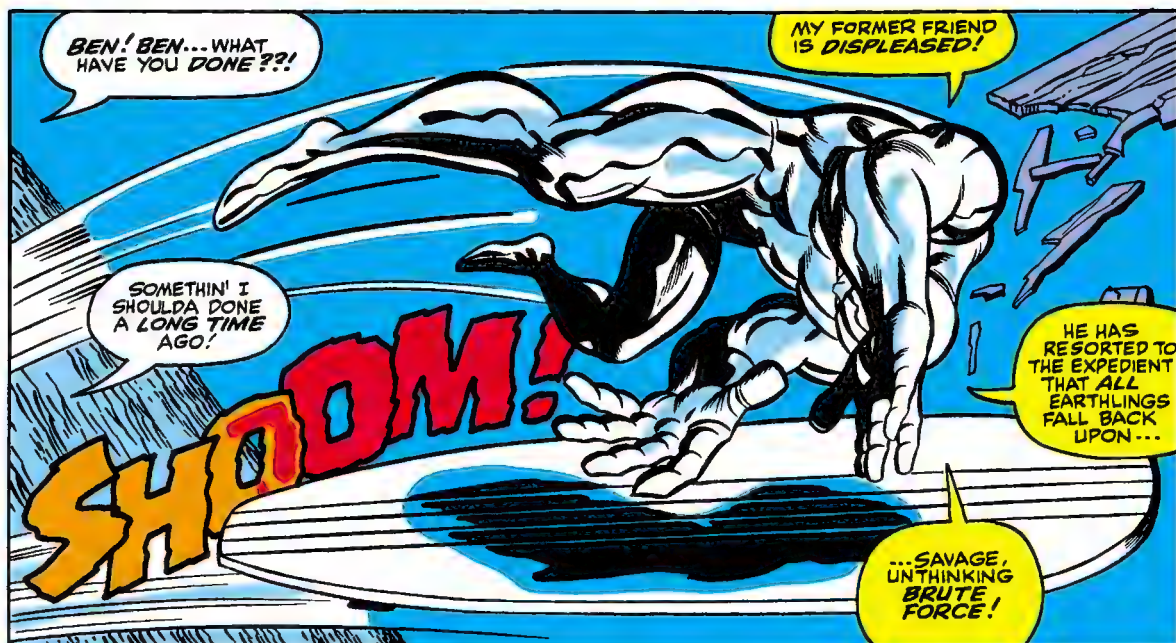


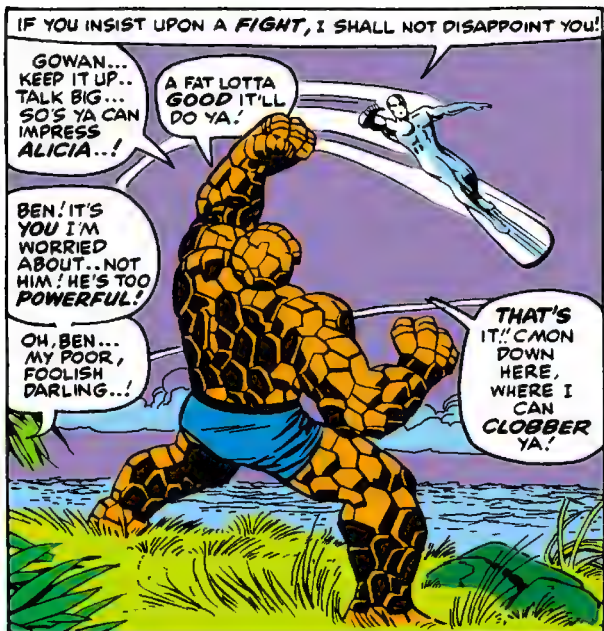












GOWAN...
KEEP IT UP...
TALK BIG...
SO'S YA CAN
IMPRESS
ALICIA...!

A FAT LOTTA
GOOD IT'LL
DO YA.

BEN! IT'S
YOU I'M
WORRIED
ABOUT...NOT
HIM! HE'S TOO
POWERFUL!

OH, BEN...
MY POOR...
FOOLISH
DARLING...!

THAT'S
IT!! C'MON
DOWN
HERE,
WHERE I
CAN
Clobber
YA.

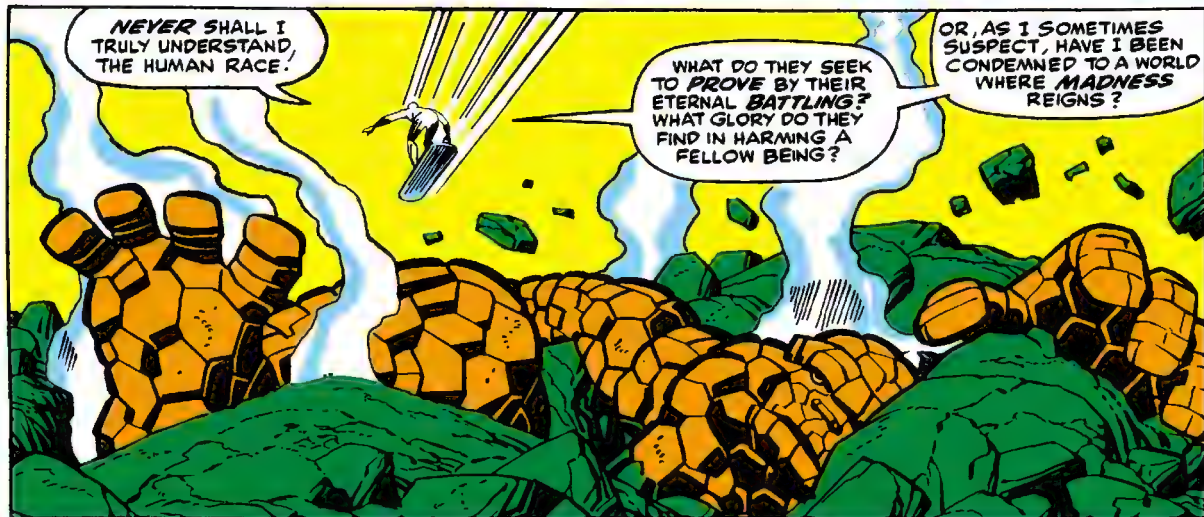


WEAPONS SUCH AS
THIS IRRESISTIBLE
COSMIC BLAST!!

IF FIGHT WE
MUST, I AM
BOUND TO USE
THE WEAPONS
OF THE SILVER
SURFER!!

URRGHH!

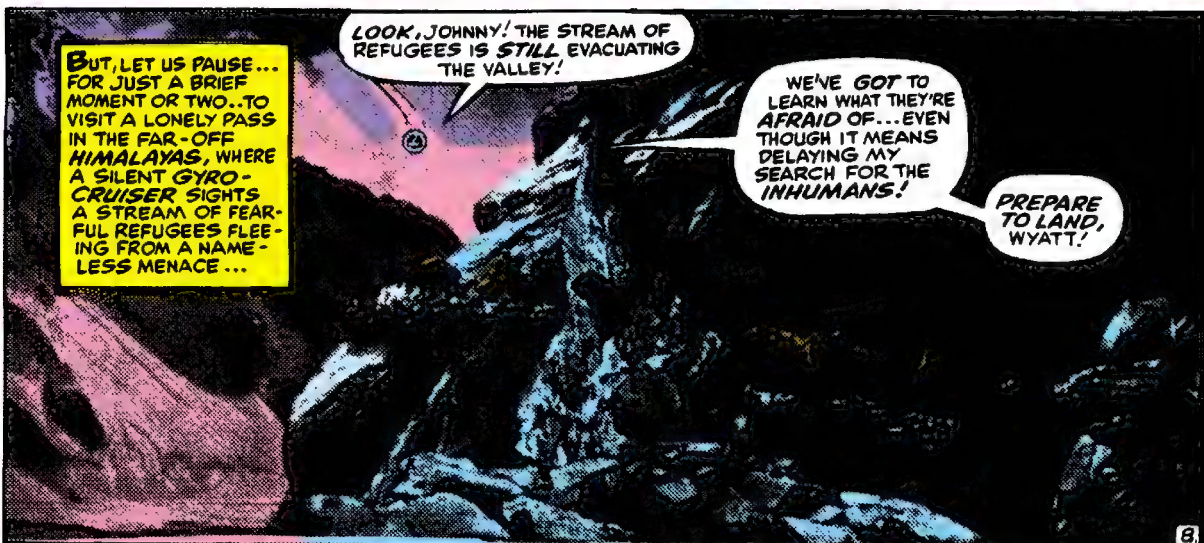
ZAK!



NEVER SHALL I
TRULY UNDERSTAND
THE HUMAN RACE.

WHAT DO THEY SEEK
TO PROVE BY THEIR
ETERNAL BATTLING?
WHAT GLORY DO THEY
FIND IN HARMING A
FELLOW BEING?

OR, AS I SOMETIMES
SUSPECT, HAVE I BEEN
CONDEMNED TO A WORLD
WHERE MADNESS
REIGNS?

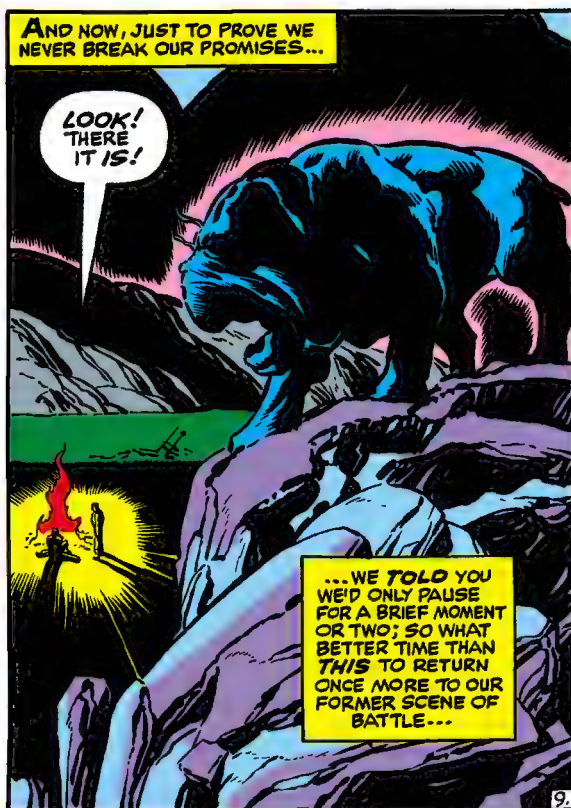
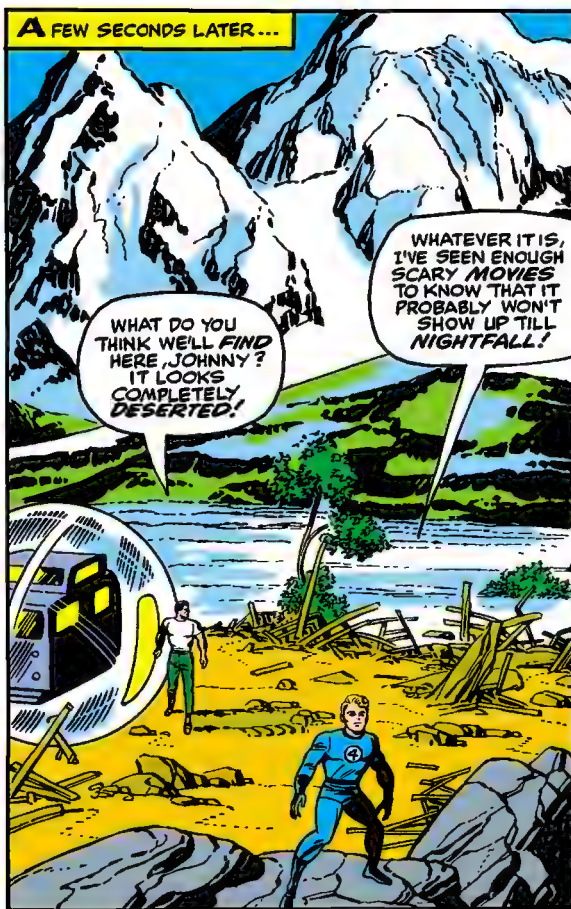


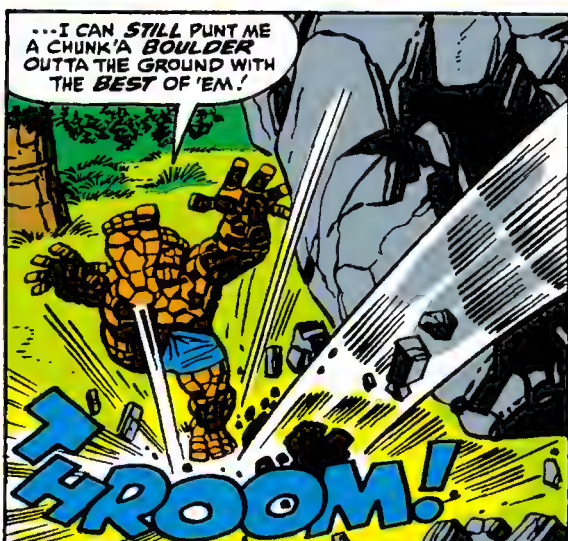
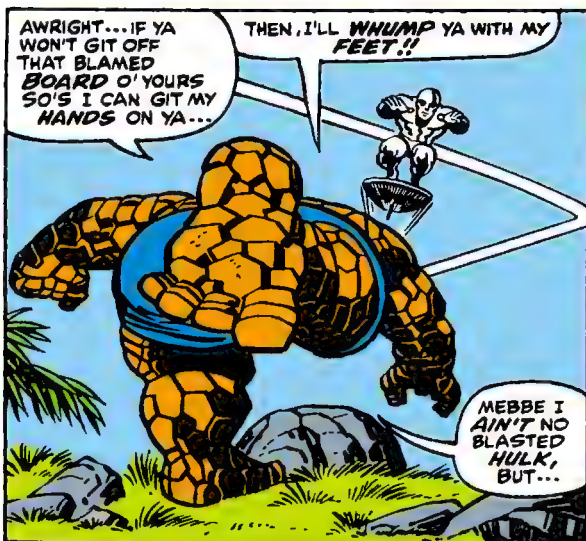
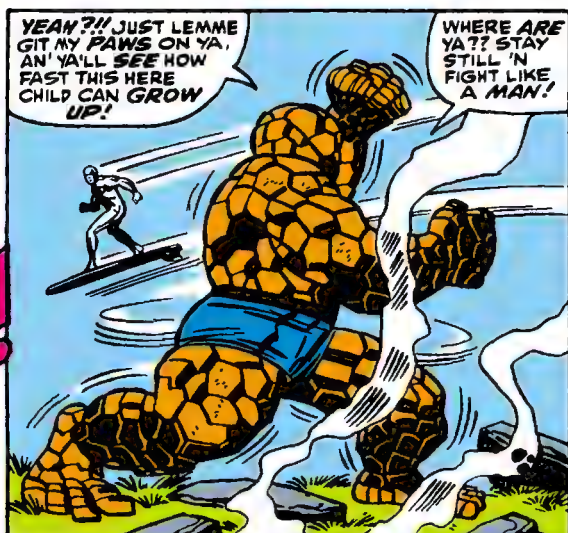
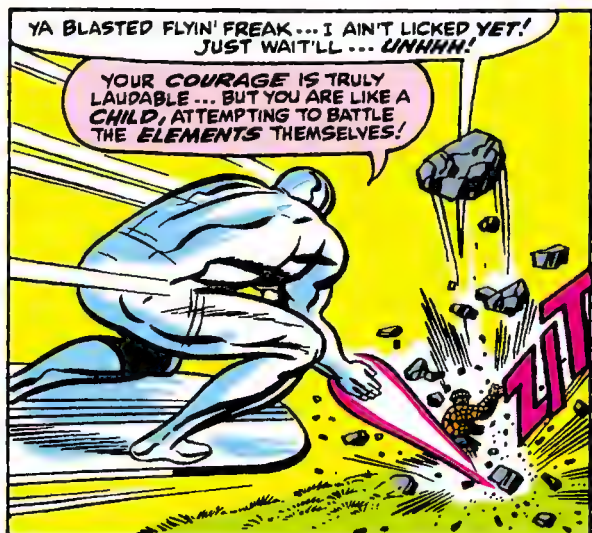
BUT, LET US PAUSE...
FOR JUST A BRIEF
MOMENT OR TWO...TO
VISIT A LONELY PASS
IN THE FAR-OFF
HIMALAYAS, WHERE
A SILENT GYRO-
CRUISER SIGHTS
A STREAM OF FEAR-
FUL REFUGEES FLEE-
ING FROM A NAME-
LESS MENACE...

LOOK, JOHNNY! THE STREAM OF
REFUGEES IS STILL EVACUATING
THE VALLEY!

WE'VE GOT TO
LEARN WHAT THEY'RE
AFRAID OF...EVEN
THOUGH IT MEANS
DELAYING MY
SEARCH FOR THE
INHUMANS!

PREPARE
TO LAND,
WYATT!







NOW THAT I GOTCHA WHERE I CAN REACH YA, I'LL...!

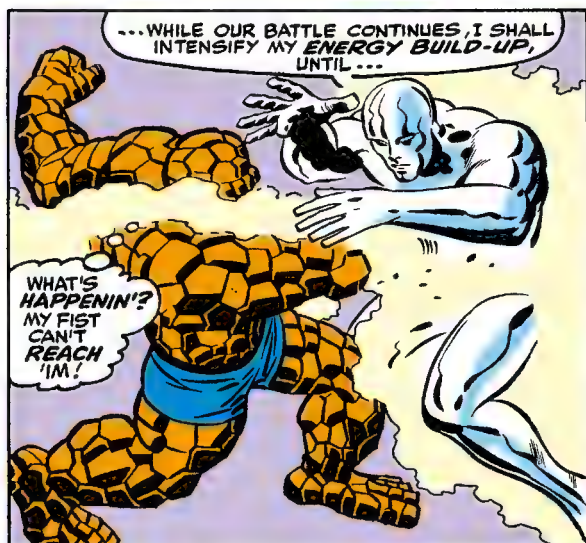
WHAT'SAMATTER WITH ME? THAT MILK-WHITE MONKEY'S TRYIN' TO STEAL MY GAL AWAY... AND I GOTTA FORCE MYSELF TO HATE 'IM!

WHY DO I KEEP PULLIN' MY PUNCH EVERY TIME I TOSS A HAYMAKER HIS WAY??

THOUGH YOU ARE MERELY AN EARTH MORTAL, YOUR NATURAL STRENGTH IS ALMOST BEYOND MY COMPREHENSION!

STAND STILL, BLAST YA, IT'LL ONLY HURT FOR A MINNIT!

BUT, EVEN FOR ONE WHO RIDES THE CURRENTS OF SPACE, THE FIRST LAW IS SELF-PRESERVATION! AND SO...



...WHILE OUR BATTLE CONTINUES, I SHALL INTENSIFY MY ENERGY BUILD-UP, UNTIL...

WHAT'S HAPPENIN'? MY FIST CAN'T REACH 'IM!

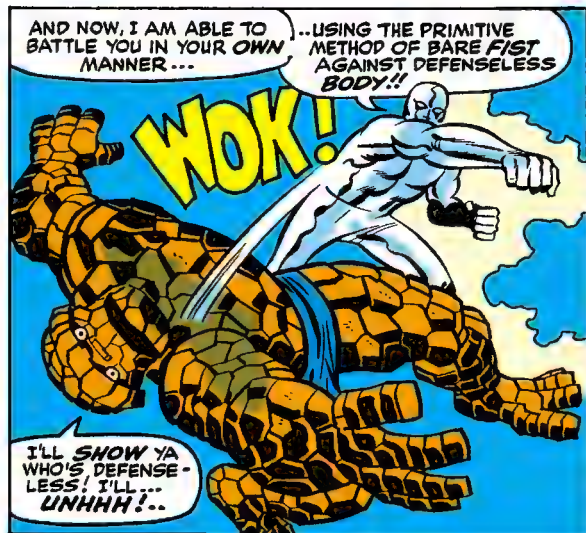


AT LAST, MY OWN STRENGTH IS GREAT ENOUGH TO MATCH YOURS!

YER WASTIN' YER TIME, MISTER! YOU AIN'T GONNA TALK ME OUTTA THE PICTURE!

YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT I AM NOT BOUND BY THE PHYSICAL LAWS OF EARTH!

YOU STILL DO NOT SEE THAT I CAN INCREASE MY EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL ENERGY TO ALMOST ANY DEGREE I DESIRE!



AND NOW, I AM ABLE TO BATTLE YOU IN YOUR OWN MANNER...

...USING THE PRIMITIVE METHOD OF BARE FIST AGAINST DEFENSELESS BODY!!

WOK!

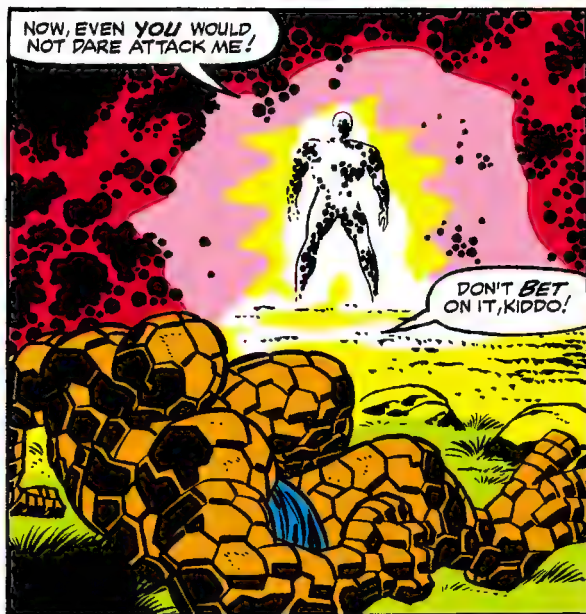
I'LL SHOW YA WHO'S DEFENSELESS! I'LL... UNHHH!...



BUT, I PERCEIVE THAT YOU SHALL NEVER SURRENDER!

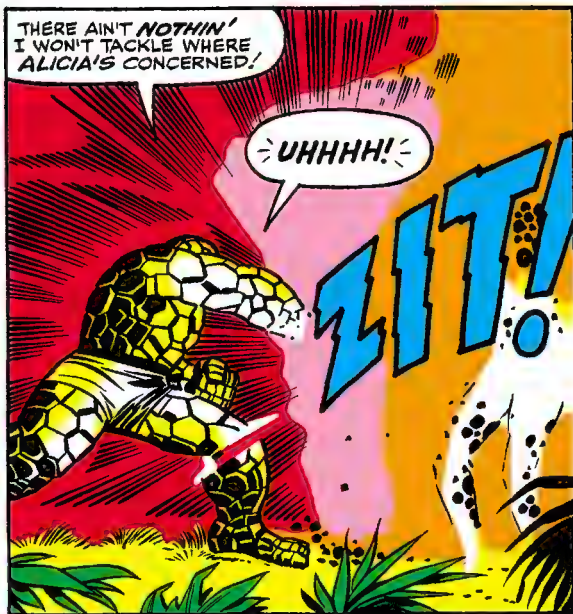
THEREFORE, I MUST TAKE EXTREME MEASURES...!

I MUST INCREASE MY ENERGY TO ATOMIC STRENGTH!!



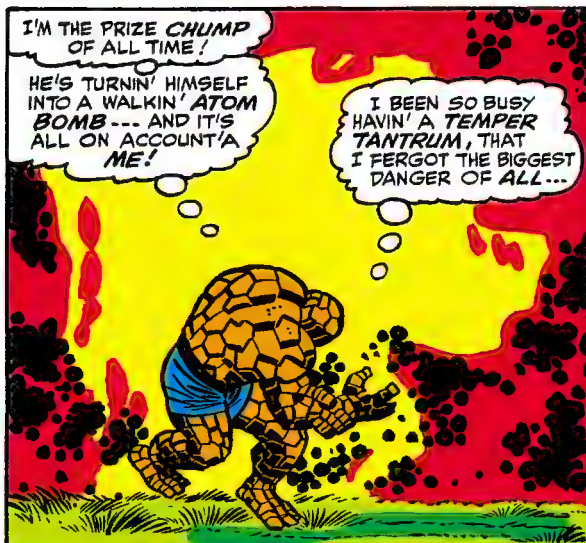
NOW, EVEN YOU WOULD NOT DARE ATTACK ME!

DON'T BET ON IT, KIDDO!



THERE AIN'T *NOTHIN'* I WON'T TACKLE WHERE ALICIA'S CONCERNED!

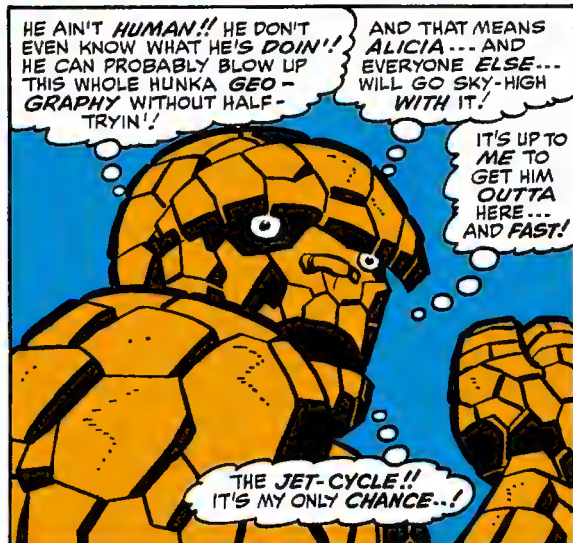
UHHHH!



I'M THE PRIZE *CHUMP* OF ALL TIME!

HE'S TURNIN' HIMSELF INTO A WALKIN' *ATOM BOMB* --- AND IT'S ALL ON ACCOUNT/A *ME!*

I BEEN SO BUSY HAVIN' A *TEMPER TANTRUM*, THAT I FERGOT THE BIGGEST DANGER OF ALL...

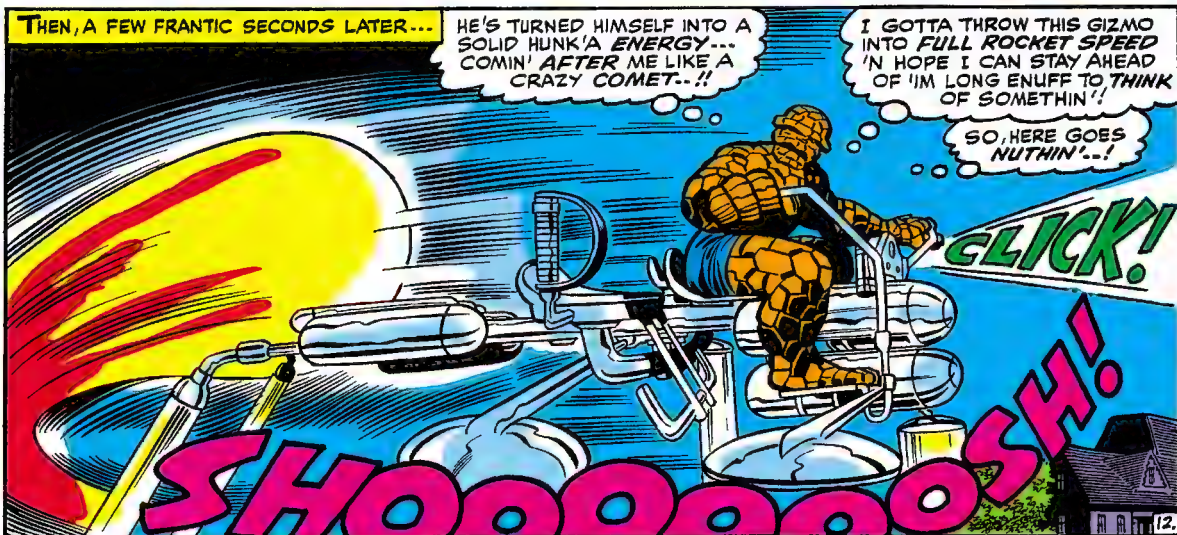


HE AIN'T *HUMAN!!* HE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HE'S DOIN'!! HE CAN PROBABLY BLOW UP THIS WHOLE HUNKA *GEO-GRAPHY* WITHOUT HALF-TRYIN'!

AND THAT MEANS *ALICIA*... AND EVERYONE ELSE... WILL GO SKY-HIGH WITH IT!

IT'S UP TO ME TO GET HIM *OUTTA* HERE... AND *FAST!*

THE *JET-CYCLE!!* IT'S MY ONLY CHANCE...!



THEN, A FEW FRANTIC SECONDS LATER...

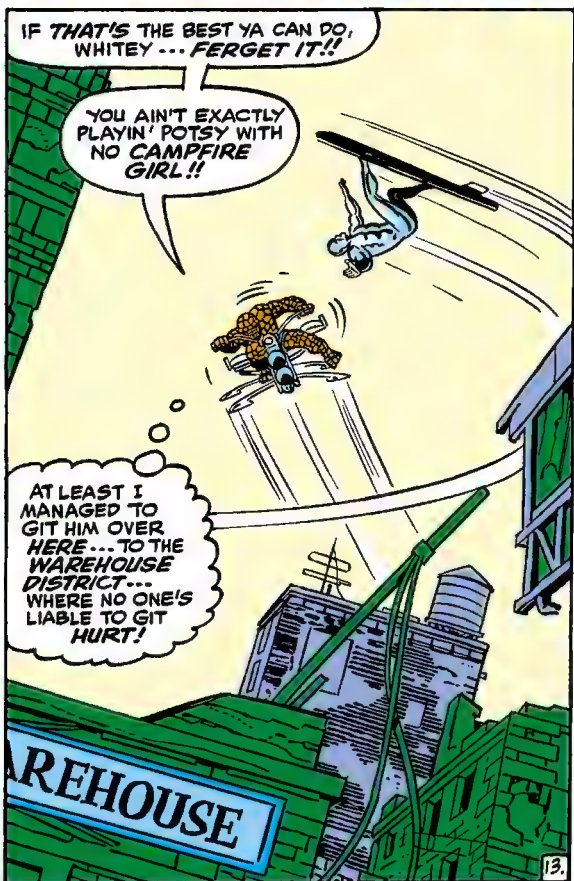
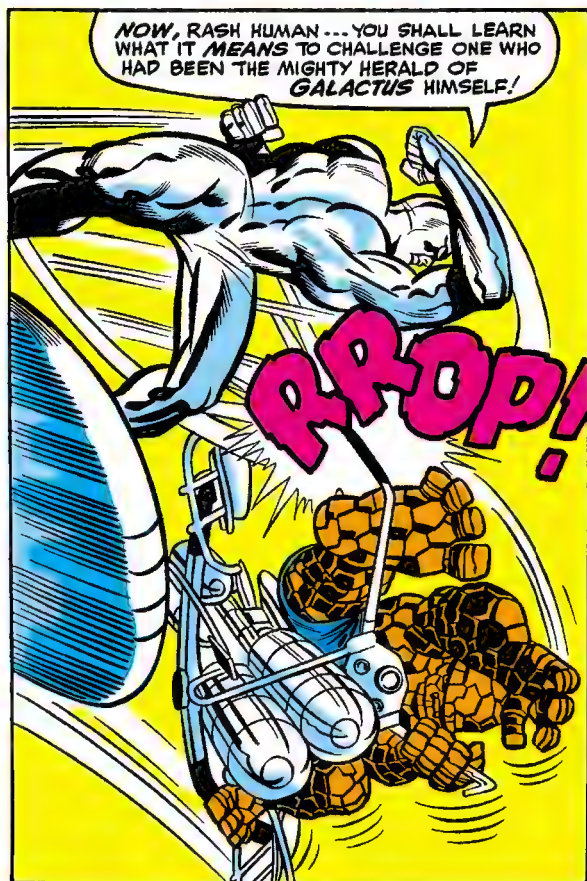
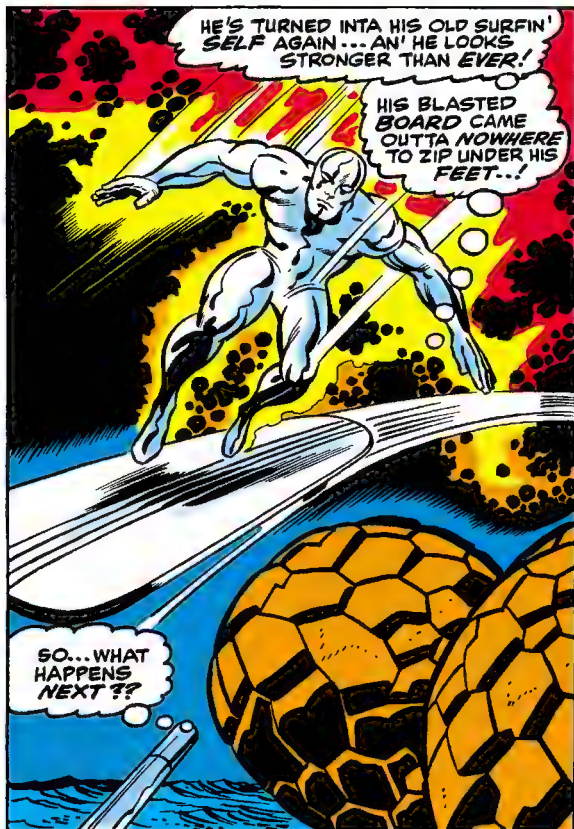
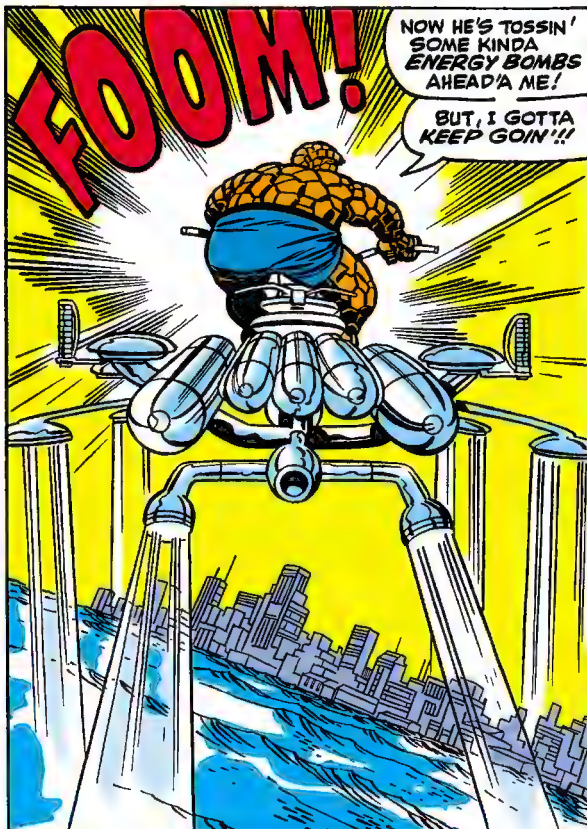
HE'S TURNED HIMSELF INTO A *SOLID HUNK/A ENERGY*... COMIN' AFTER ME LIKE A *CRAZY COMET*...!!

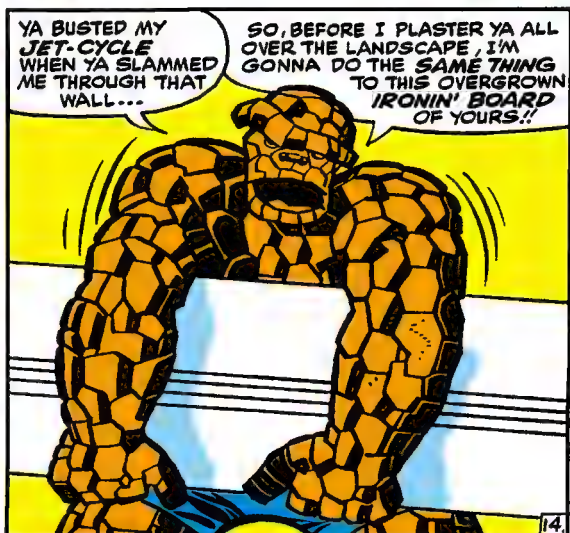
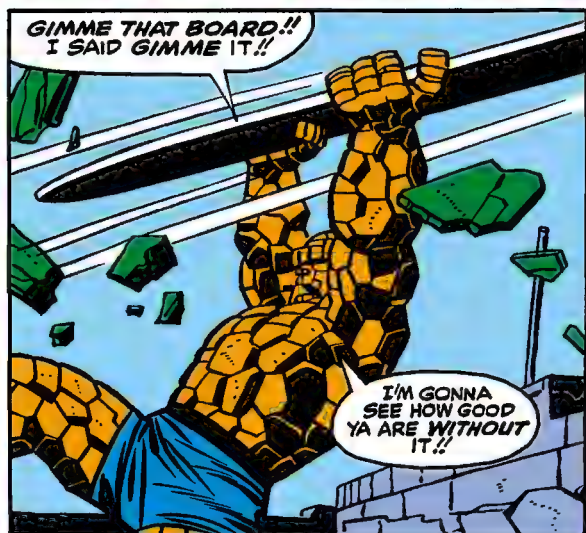
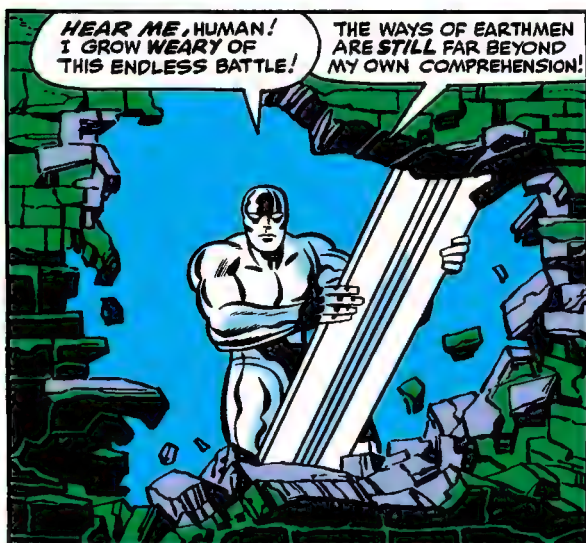
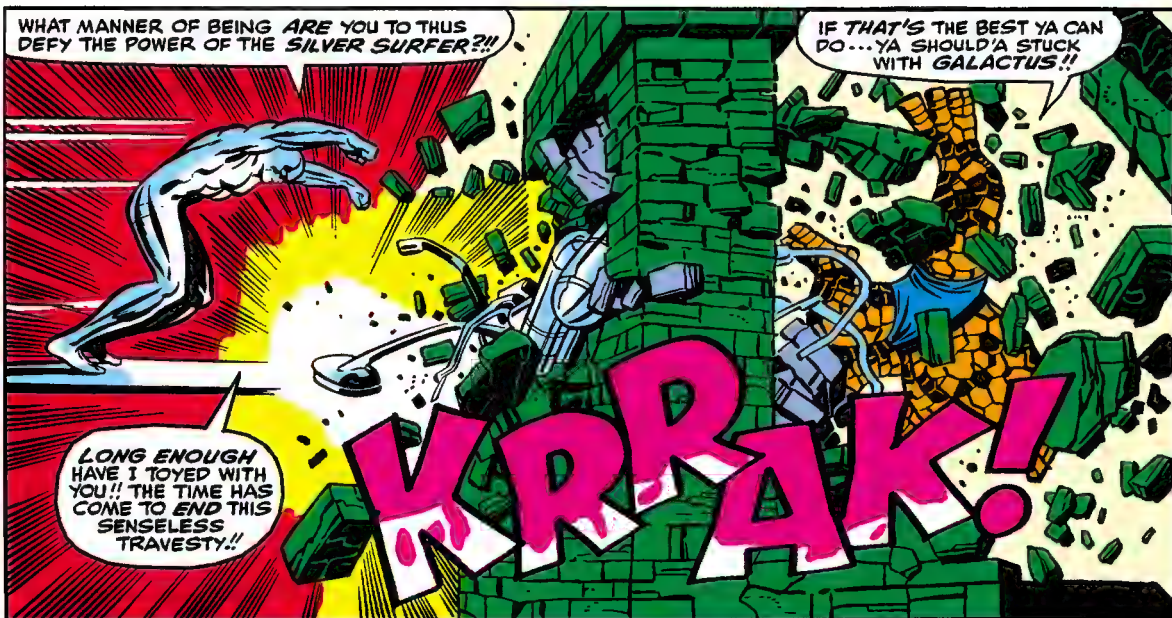
I GOTTA THROW THIS GIZMO INTO *FULL ROCKET SPEED* 'N HOPE I CAN STAY AHEAD OF 'IM LONG ENUFF TO *THINK* OF SOMETHIN'!

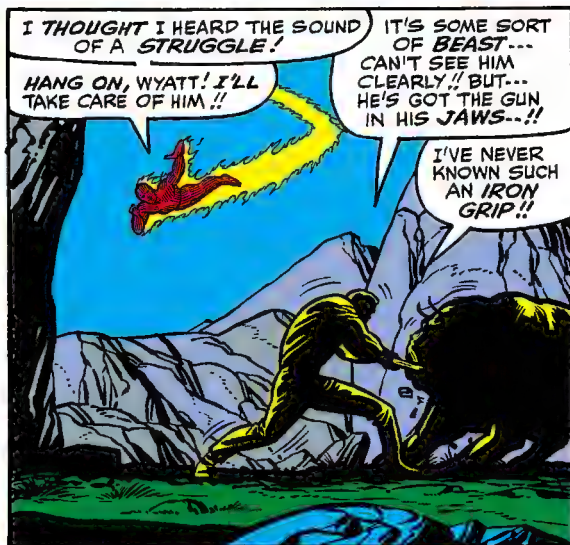
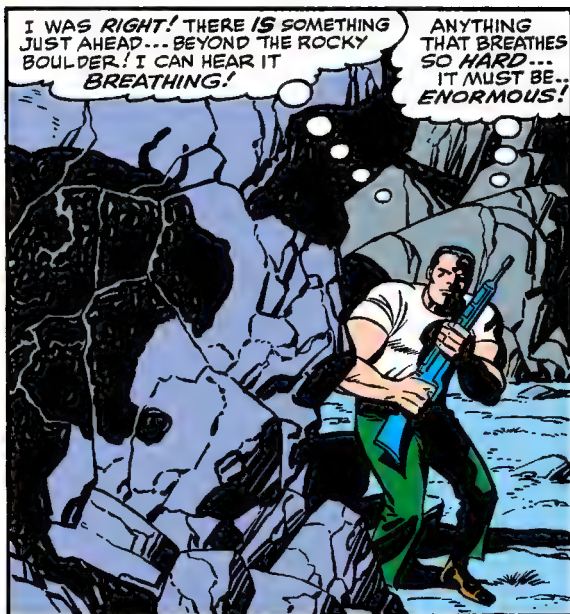
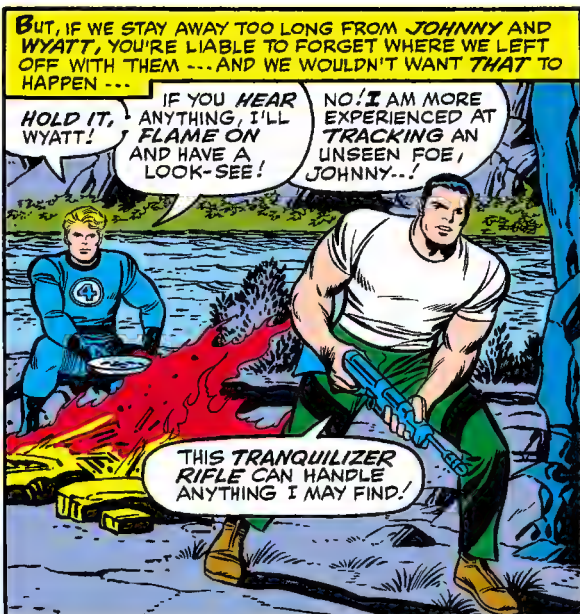
SO, HERE GOES *NUTHIN'...*!

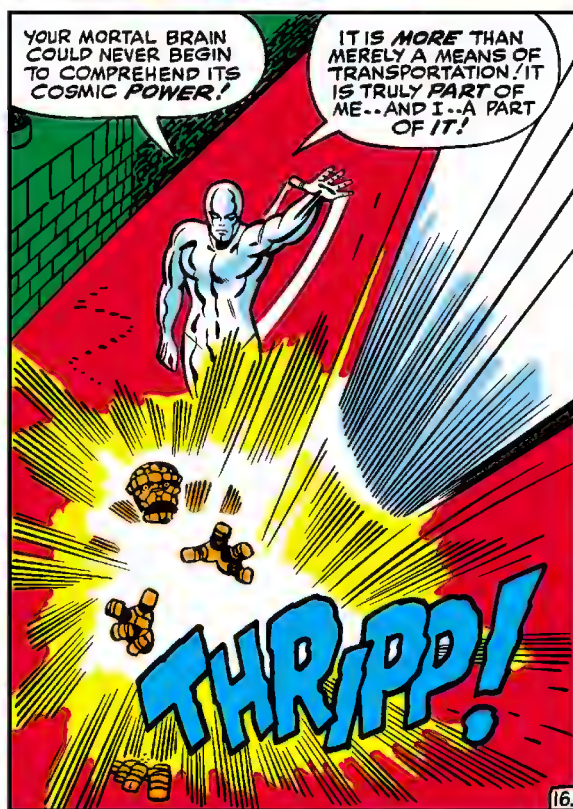
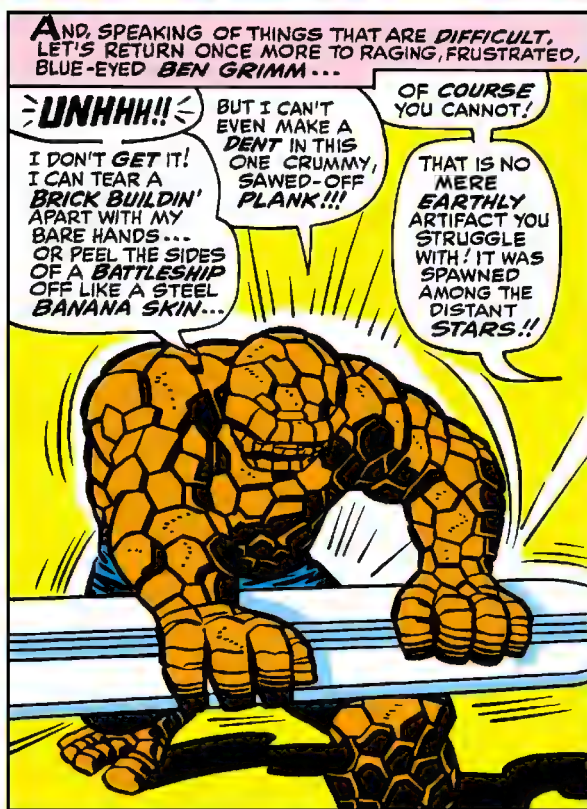
CLICK!

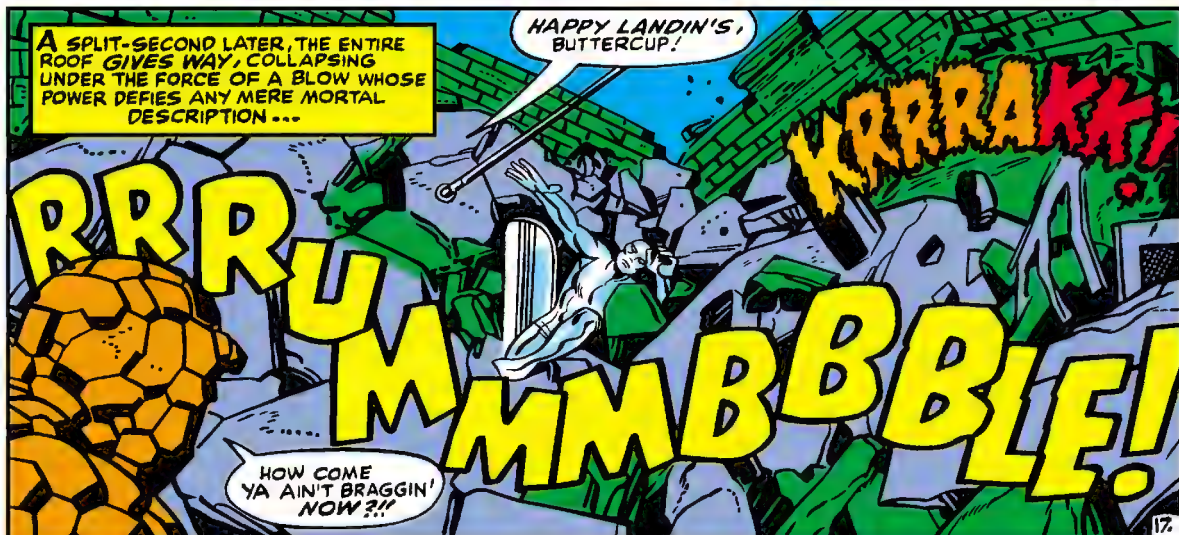
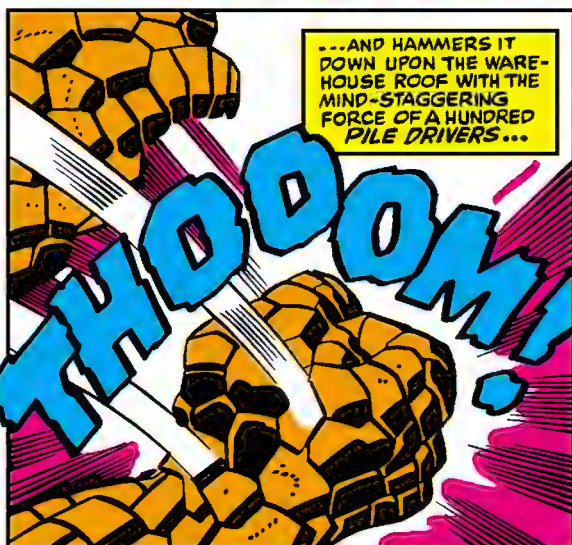
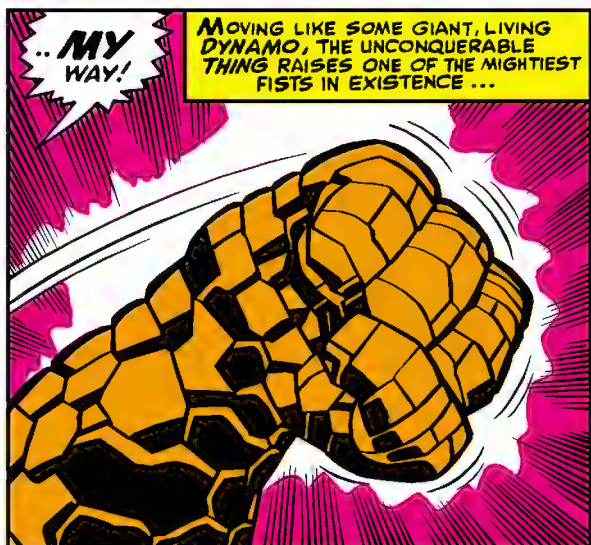
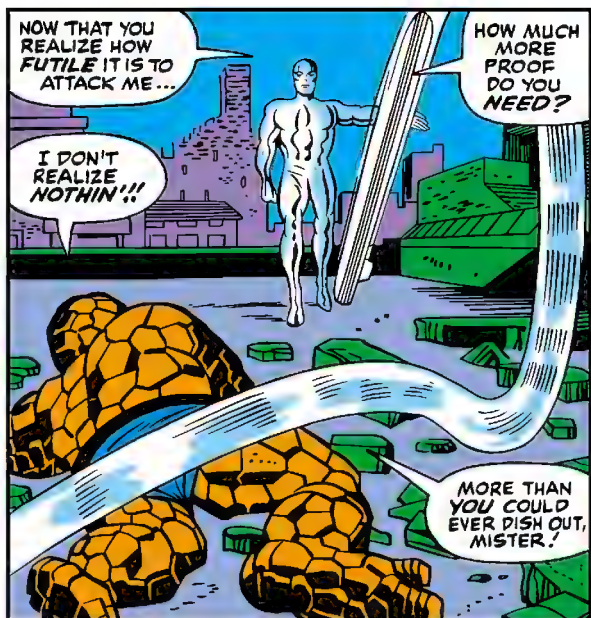
SHOOOOOSH!



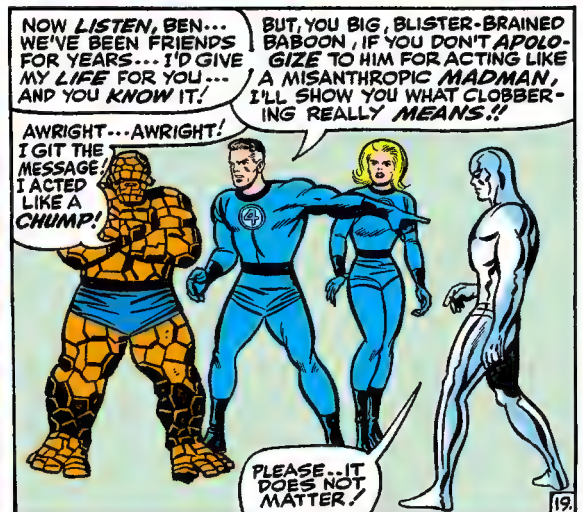
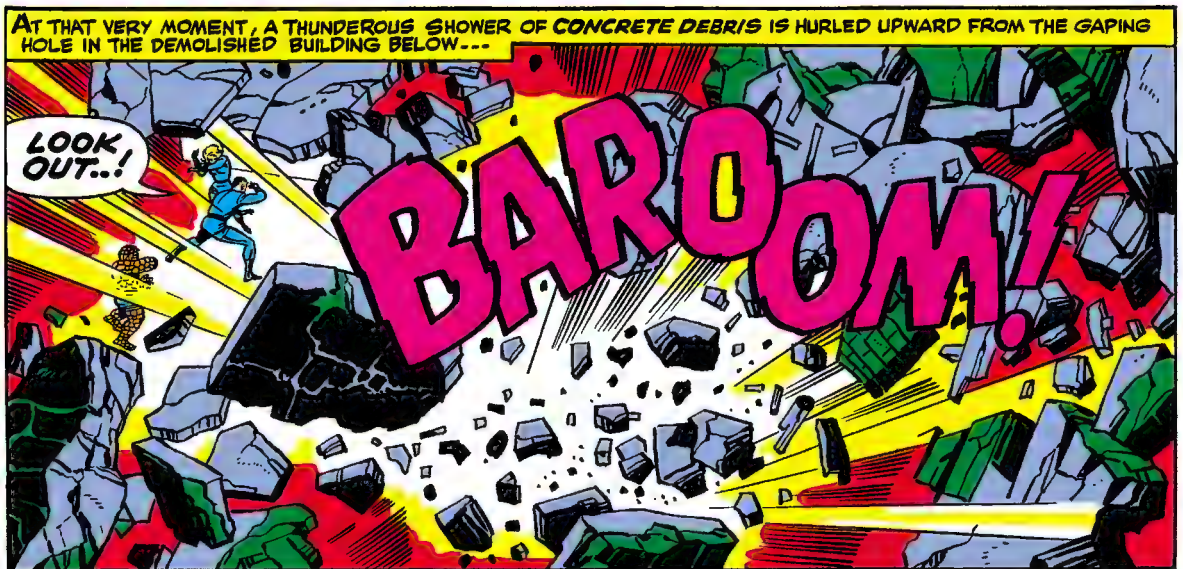












YOU DON'T KNOW HOW **LUCKY** YOU ARE, BEN! HE ONLY USED A **FRACTION** OF HIS POWER AGAINST YOU!

HE DIDN'T WANT TO **HURT** YOU... HE JUST TRIED TO **PROTECT** HIMSELF!

HE **STILL** DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THE **REASON** FOR YOUR BONE-HEADED ATTACK!

DO NOT ARGUE AMONGST YOURSELVES! THERE IS STILL **MUCH** I MUST LEARN ABOUT HUMAN BEHAVIOR!

PERHAPS I AM AS MUCH TO BLAME... FOR GIVING OFFENSE WITHOUT CAUSE!

LET ME DO WHAT I CAN TO MAKE **AMENDS!**

THAT WHICH ENERGY CAN **DESTROY**, ENERGY CAN **AGAIN REBUILD!**

THEREFORE, I SHALL BATHE THE DEMOLISHED **JET-CYCLE** WITH AN INTERCOSMIC **ENERGIZER BOLT!**

ZIZT!

FOR THE LUVVA MIKE!! THE CYCLE'S GOOD AS **NEW** AGAIN!

IT'S THE MOST INCREDIBLE EXHIBITION OF MOLECULAR RECONSTRUCTION ONE COULD IMAGINE!

SHEESH! CAN'TCHA EVER JUST SAY **HOLY SMOKE**, 'N LET IT GO AT **THAT??!**

SUDDENLY, THE STAR-SPAWNED SURFBOARD ZOOMS UP FROM THE DEBRIS, AS THE UNCANNY **SILVER SURFER** LEAPS UPON IT WITH ONE ALMOST EFFORTLESS MOTION...

I HAD THOUGHT MY JOURNEY-ING WAS OVER... BUT I WAS **WRONG!**

THERE IS STILL SO MUCH **MORE** I MUST LEARN ABOUT THE INCREDIBLE **HUMAN RACE!**

WHITTTTTT!

THANK HEAVEN EVERY-THING IS ALL RIGHT AGAIN, **REED!**

ALL RIGHT? NOT FOR ME IT AIN'T! HOW'LL I EVER **MAKE UP** WITH **ALICIA...**?

I HEARD WHAT YOU SAID...!

PERHAPS I CAN **HELP** YOU...

GIVE THOSE TO THE ONE CALLED **ALICIA!**

IT IS A PARTING GIFT... TO YOU **BOTH**... FROM THE **SILVER SURFER!**

THIP!

A BUNCHA **FLOWERS!!**

HE'S **GONE!** BUT, SOONER OR LATER HE'LL BE **COMIN' BACK!**

AND, WHEN HE **COMES...**

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN **THEN?**

NEXT

"TO FREE THE INHUMANS!"

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

Fantastic FOUR

MARVEL
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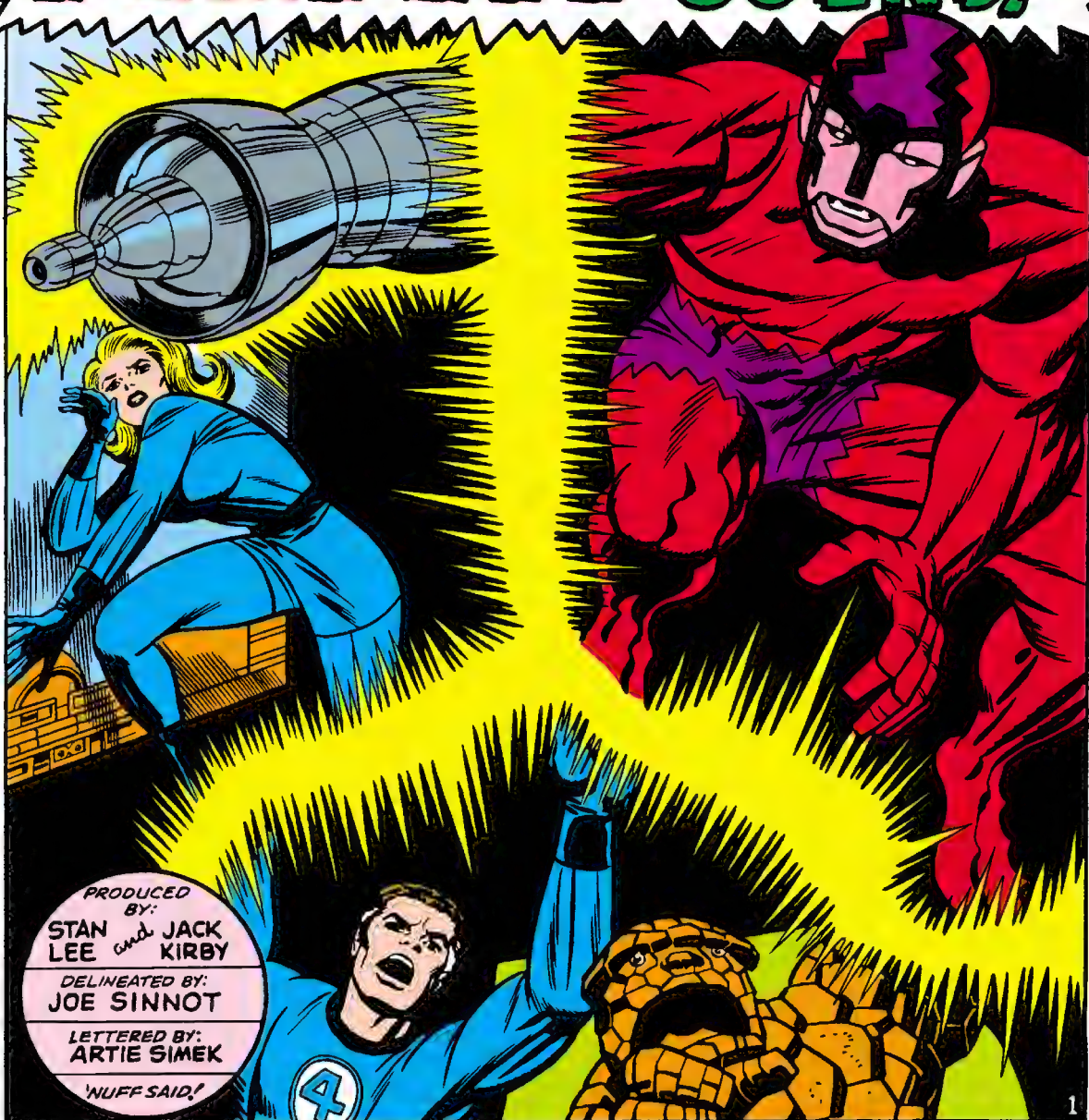
KLAW

The MURDEROUS
MASTER of SOUND!

THE FABULOUS **F.F.** ARE TRAPPED BY THE UNCANNY RETURN OF

KLAW

THE
MURDEROUS
MASTER OF
SOUND!



PRODUCED
BY:

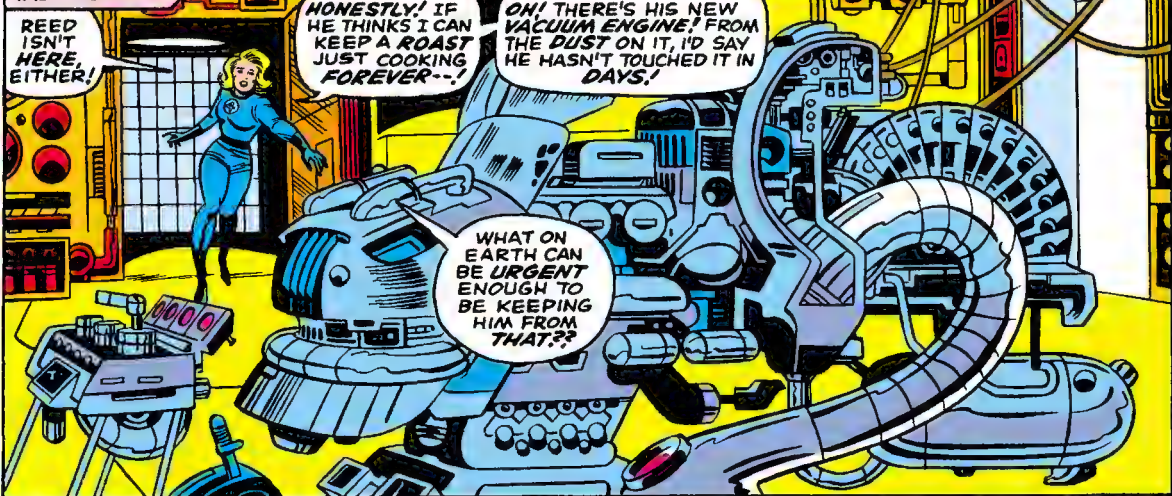
STAN LEE and JACK
KIRBY

DELINEATED BY:
JOE SINNOT

LETTERED BY:
ARTIE SIMEK

'NUFF SAID!

THOUGH THE WORLD MAY CALL HIM **MR. FANTASTIC** AND ACCLAIM HIM AS LEADER OF THE MOST FAMOUS SUPER-HERO TEAM ON EARTH, TO A CERTAIN LOVELY YOUNG LADY, **REED RICHARDS** IS MERELY AN ERRANT HUSBAND WHO HASN'T BEEN SPENDING NEARLY ENOUGH TIME WITH HIS NEW BRIDE! AND SO, WE FIND **SUE RICHARDS** BARGING INTO ONE OF THE MANY LABS ATOP THE **BAXTER BUILDING** AS OUR TITANIC TALE BEGINS --

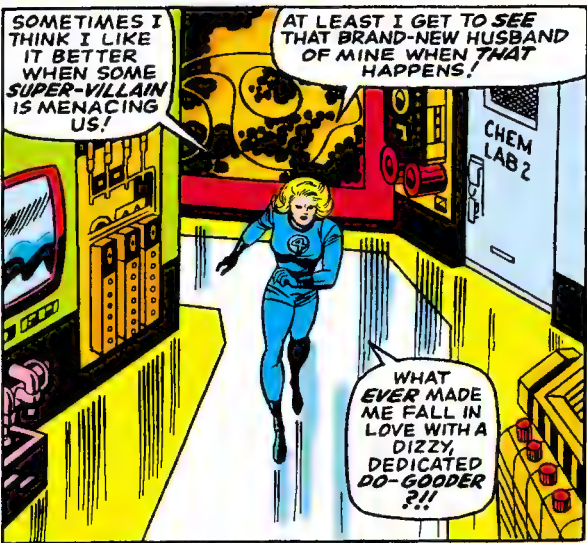


REED ISN'T HERE, EITHER!

HONESTLY! IF HE THINKS I CAN KEEP A ROAST JUST COOKING FOREVER--!

OH! THERE'S HIS NEW VACUUM ENGINE! FROM THE DUST ON IT, I'D SAY HE HASN'T TOUCHED IT IN DAYS!

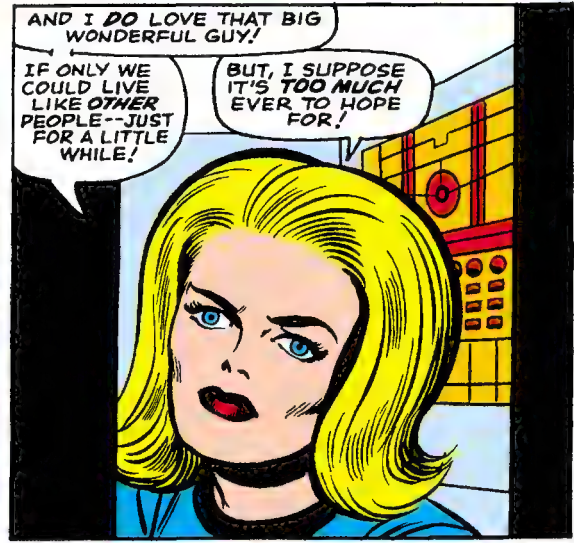
WHAT ON EARTH CAN BE URGENT ENOUGH TO BE KEEPING HIM FROM THAT??



SOMETIMES I THINK I LIKE IT BETTER WHEN SOME SUPER-VILLAIN IS MENACING US!

AT LEAST I GET TO SEE THAT BRAND-NEW HUSBAND OF MINE WHEN THAT HAPPENS!

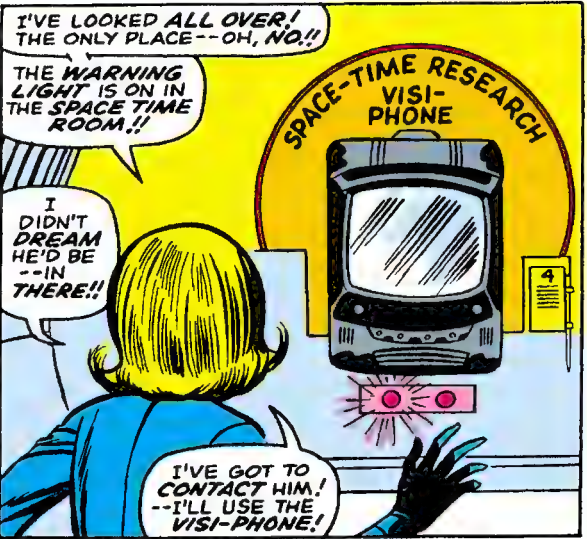
WHAT EVER MADE ME FALL IN LOVE WITH A DIZZY, DEDICATED DO-GOODER?!!



AND I DO LOVE THAT BIG WONDERFUL GUY!

IF ONLY WE COULD LIVE LIKE OTHER PEOPLE--JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE!

BUT, I SUPPOSE IT'S TOO MUCH EVER TO HOPE FOR!

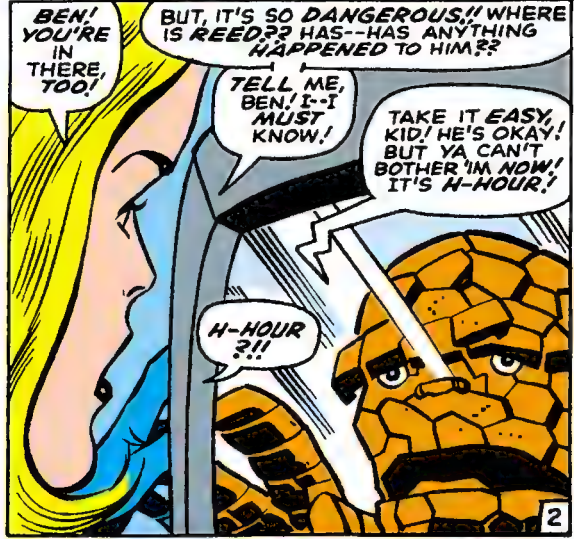


I'VE LOOKED ALL OVER! THE ONLY PLACE--OH, NO!!

THE WARNING LIGHT IS ON IN THE SPACE TIME ROOM!!

I DIDN'T DREAM HE'D BE --IN THERE!!

I'VE GOT TO CONTACT HIM! --I'LL USE THE VISI-PHONE!



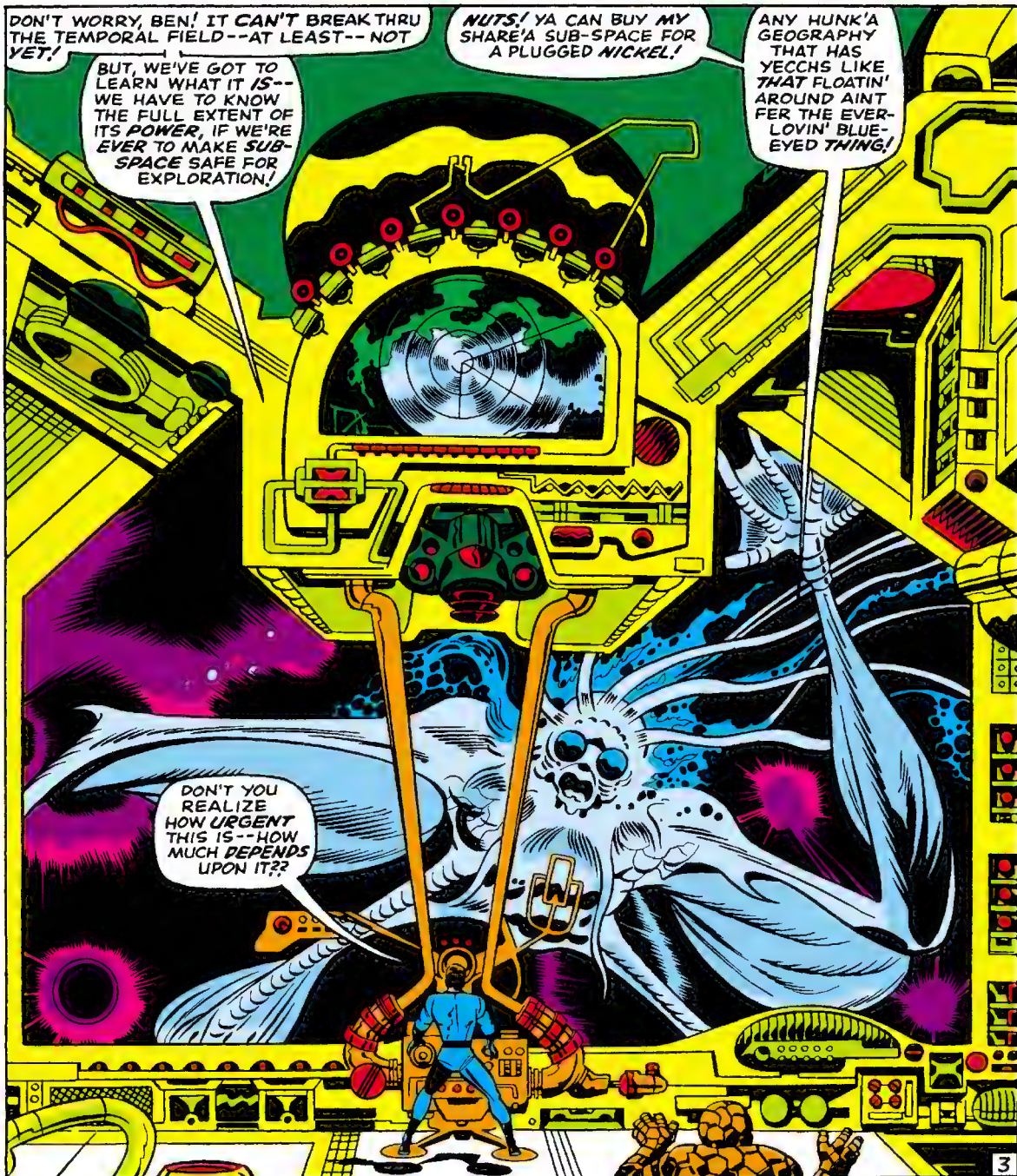
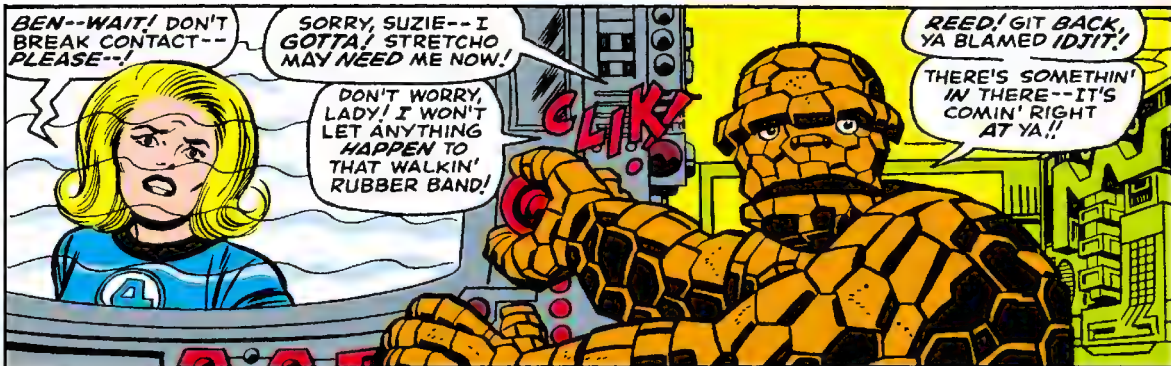
BEN! YOU'RE IN THERE, TOO!

BUT, IT'S SO DANGEROUS!! WHERE IS REED?? HAS--HAS ANYTHING HAPPENED TO HIM??

TELL ME, BEN! I--I MUST KNOW!

TAKE IT EASY, KID! HE'S OKAY! BUT YA CAN'T BOTHER 'IM NOW! IT'S H-HOUR!

H-HOUR?!!





SUB-SPACE IS A VAST, UNKNOWN UNIVERSE--CONTAINING THE ANSWER TO A MILLION AGE-OLD QUESTIONS!

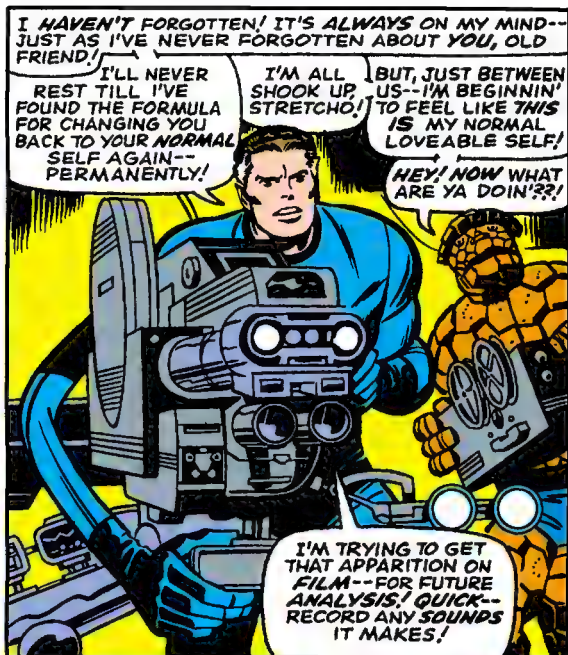
YEAH? GIMME A FER-INSTANCE!

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THE INHUMANS, BEN--TRAPPED BEHIND THAT UNBREAKABLE NEGATIVE ZONE?

CRYSTAL IS STILL IN THERE--AND POOR JOHNNY WILL NEVER BE THE SAME TILL HE'S FOUND HER AGAIN!

I WANT TO HELP HIM, BEN! I YET MAY FIND AN ENTRANCE--THRU SUB-SPACE ITSELF!

AND ALL THIS TIME THE KID THINKS YA FORGOT ALL ABOUT 'IM! HE'S OUT TRYIN' TO FIND 'ER HIMSELF!



I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN! IT'S ALWAYS ON MY MIND--JUST AS I'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU, OLD FRIEND!

I'LL NEVER REST TILL I'VE FOUND THE FORMULA FOR CHANGING YOU BACK TO YOUR NORMAL SELF AGAIN--PERMANENTLY!

I'M ALL SHOOK UP, BUT, JUST BETWEEN US--I'M BEGINNIN' TO FEEL LIKE THIS IS MY NORMAL LOVEABLE SELF!

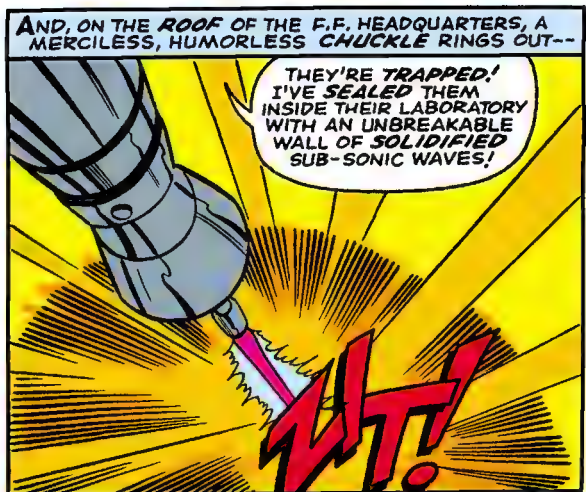
HEY! NOW WHAT ARE YA DOIN'??!

I'M TRYING TO GET THAT APPARITION ON FILM--FOR FUTURE ANALYSIS! QUICK--RECORD ANY SOUNDS IT MAKES!



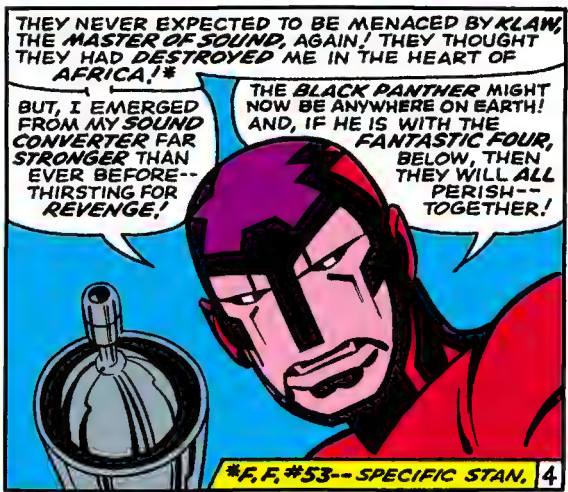
IT'S A BLASTED HAM! LISTEN TO THE RACKET IT'S MAKIN' NOW!

NO, BEN! THAT'S NOT THE CREATURE FROM SUB-SPACE! IT'S SOME SORT OF SONIC BOOM--!



AND, ON THE ROOF OF THE F.F. HEADQUARTERS, A MERCILESS, HUMORLESS CHUCKLE RINGS OUT--

THEY'RE TRAPPED! I'VE SEALED THEM INSIDE THEIR LABORATORY WITH AN UNBREAKABLE WALL OF SOLIDIFIED SUB-SONIC WAVES!



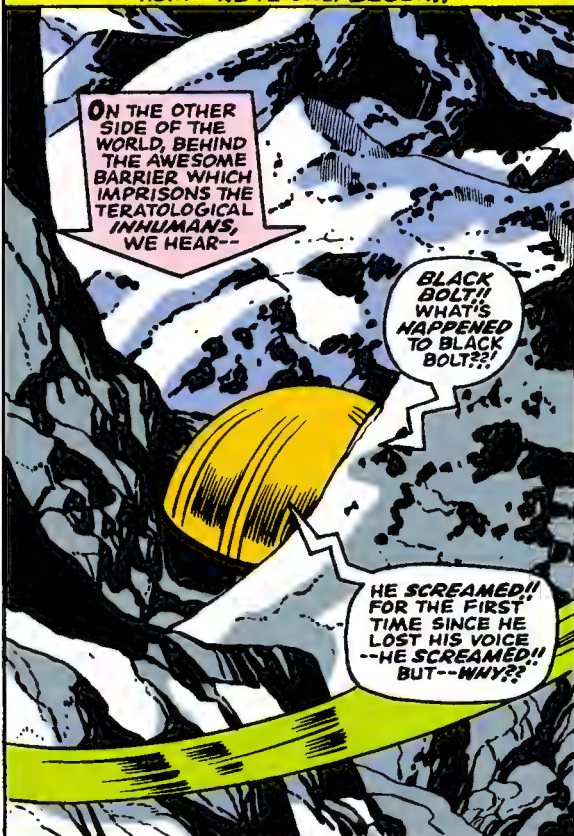
THEY NEVER EXPECTED TO BE MENACED BY KLAU, THE MASTER OF SOUND, AGAIN! THEY THOUGHT THEY HAD DESTROYED ME IN THE HEART OF AFRICA!*

BUT, I EMERGED FROM MY SOUND CONVERTER FAR STRONGER THAN EVER BEFORE--THIRSTING FOR REVENGE!

THE BLACK PANTHER MIGHT NOW BE ANYWHERE ON EARTH! AND, IF HE IS WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR, BELOW, THEN THEY WILL ALL PERISH--TOGETHER!

*F.F.#53-- SPECIFIC STAN, 4

CONFUSING ENOUGH FOR YOU, FAITHFUL ONE? WELL, HOLD TIGHT--WE'VE ONLY *BEGUN*!!



ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, BEHIND THE AWESOME BARRIER WHICH IMPRISONS THE TERATOLOGICAL INHUMANS, WE HEAR--

BLACK BOLT!! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BLACK BOLT??

HE SCREAMED!! FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HE LOST HIS VOICE--HE SCREAMED!! BUT--WHY??

IT'S CLEAR TO ME NOW! HE USED HIS GREAT POWERS TO DRIVE THE *ABSORBA-BOMB* AGAINST THE BARRIER, HOPING TO SHATTER IT AT LAST!*

BUT, HE SUDDENLY REALIZED THAT WE WOULD BE DESTROYED ALONG WITH THE BARRIER, DUE TO THE ENERGY HE HAD BUILT UP!

ONLY THAT ONE, LIFE-SAVING SCREAM COULD HAVE DE-FUSED THE BOMB IN TIME!

IF BLACK BOLT HAD DIED, THEN LIFE WOULD HAVE HELD NO MEANING FOR MEDUSA!

HE SAVED US ALL--BUT, AT WHAT COST TO HIMSELF?

THAT MEANS WE STILL ARE TRAPPED--NO CLOSER TO FREEDOM THAN BEFORE!



*LUCKY IT HAPPENED AS RECENTLY AS ISH#54, SO WE STILL KINDA REMEMBER IT! --SLEEPLESS STAN.

THAT ACCURSED BOMB!! IT ALMOST CAUSED THE DEATH OF THE GREATEST, MOST WONDERFUL MAN IN ALL THE WORLD!

I'D RATHER BE TRAPPED HERE FOREVER THAN HAVE BLACK BOLT SACRIFICE HIS LIFE TO SET US FREE!

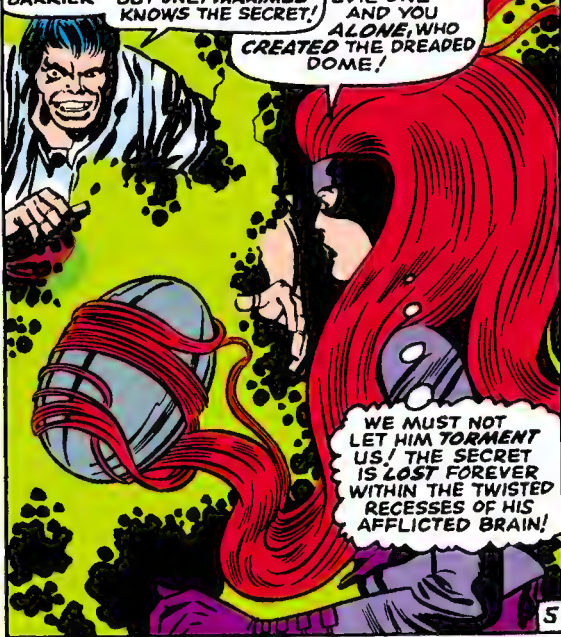


SUDDENLY, THE INSANE CACKLING OF MAXIMUS, THE MAD BROTHER OF BLACK BOLT, CUTS THRU THE AIR LIKE THE SOUND OF A KNIFE BLADE SCRAPING ALONG A BLACKBOARD--

A MOST NOBLE SENTIMENT, MEDUSA! A PITY YOUR BELOVED CANNOT NOW HEAR YOU!

THERE IS A WAY THRU THE BARRIER--BUT ONLY MAXIMUS KNOWS THE SECRET!

IT WAS YOU, EVIL ONE-- AND YOU ALONE, WHO CREATED THE DREADED DOME!



WE MUST NOT LET HIM TORMENT US! THE SECRET IS LOST FOREVER WITHIN THE TWISTED RECESSES OF HIS AFFLICTED BRAIN!



YOU ALL CALL ME MAD--MAXIMUS THE MADMAN--AND YET, ONLY I KNOW HOW TO GET THRU THE NEGATIVE ZONE! ONLY A MADMAN KNOWS THE ANSWER!

BUT I'LL NEVER TELL! BLACK BOLT DEFEATED ME--HE TOOK AWAY MY CROWN--MY THRONE--SO THIS SHALL BE MY REVENGE! YOU'RE ALL TRAPPED HERE WITH MAXIMUS--FOREVER!

BUT BLACK BOLT SPARED YOUR EVIL LIFE! IF NOT FOR HIM, YOU'D HAVE BEEN SLAIN FOR TREASON!

BUT YOU CAN NOT KILL ME NOW! ONLY I KNOW THE SECRET!



GET OUT! OUT, YOU CRAVEN, SOULLESS, MURDERING FIEND!

EVEN THE MERCY OF BLACK BOLT WON'T SAVE YOU FOR LONG!

SOONER OR LATER OUR PATIENCE WILL REACH THE BREAKING POINT! SOONER OR LATER YOU'LL BE MADE TO PAY FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE--TO ALL OF US!

NO! NO! NONE MAY HARM MAXIMUS! I WAS BORN TO BE KING--BORN TO RULE! KING! KING! KING!

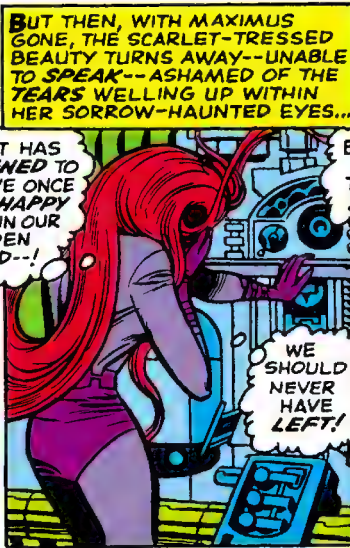


IT WAS YOUR INSATIABLE LUST FOR POWER THAT DROVE YOU MAD--THAT KEEPS YOU MAD!

YOU'LL NEVER BE KING WHILE BLACK BOLT LIVES, DO YOU HEAR? NEVER!

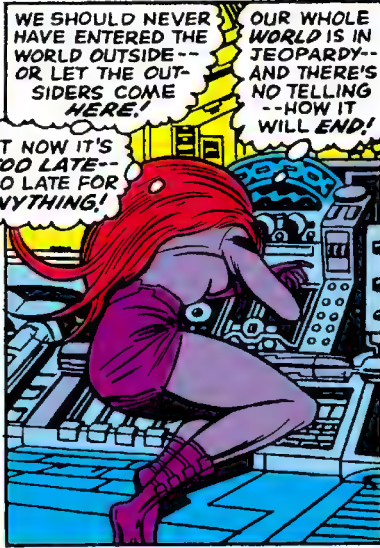
WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO US?? WE ONCE WERE HAPPY HERE--IN OUR HIDDEN LAND--!

NOT IF WE MUST REMAIN TRAPPED HERE FOREVER!



BUT THEN, WITH MAXIMUS GONE, THE SCARLET-TRESSED BEAUTY TURNS AWAY--UNABLE TO SPEAK--ASHAMED OF THE TEARS WELLING UP WITHIN HER SORROW-HAUNTED EYES...

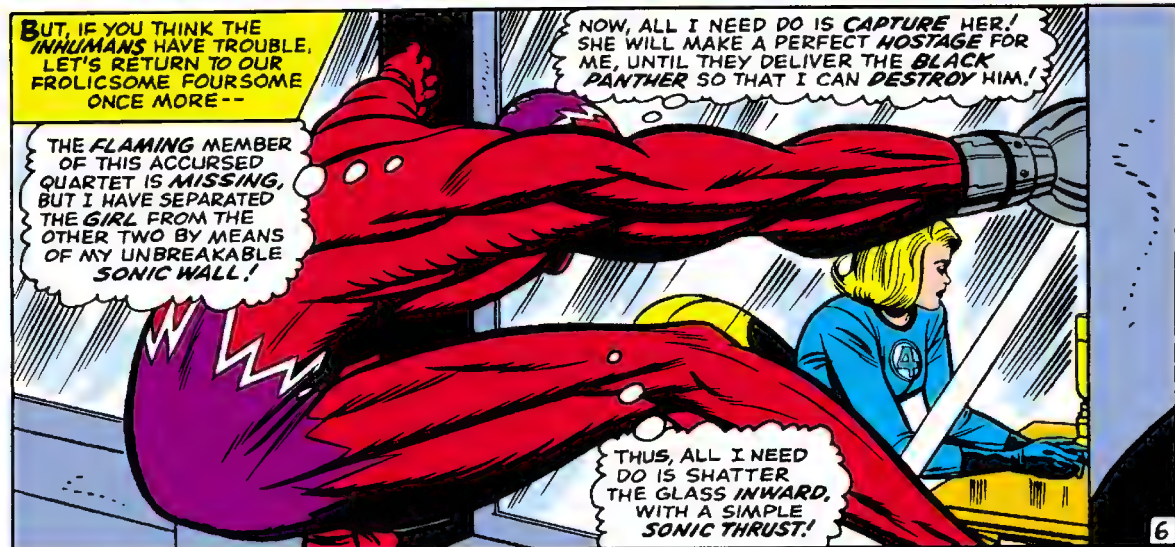
WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT!



WE SHOULD NEVER HAVE ENTERED THE WORLD OUTSIDE--OR LET THE OUTSIDERS COME HERE!

OUR WHOLE WORLD IS IN JEOPARDY--AND THERE'S NO TELLING--HOW IT WILL END!

BUT NOW IT'S TOO LATE--TOO LATE FOR ANYTHING!



BUT, IF YOU THINK THE INHUMANS HAVE TROUBLE, LET'S RETURN TO OUR FROLICHSOME FOURSOME ONCE MORE--

THE FLAMING MEMBER OF THIS ACCURSED QUARTET IS MISSING, BUT I HAVE SEPARATED THE GIRL FROM THE OTHER TWO BY MEANS OF MY UNBREAKABLE SONIC WALL!

NOW, ALL I NEED DO IS CAPTURE HER! SHE WILL MAKE A PERFECT HOSTAGE FOR ME, UNTIL THEY DELIVER THE BLACK PANTHER SO THAT I CAN DESTROY HIM!

THUS, ALL I NEED DO IS SHATTER THE GLASS INWARD, WITH A SIMPLE SONIC THRUST!



A SONIC BLAST! WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!

LUCKILY, I THREW UP MY INVISIBLE FORCE FIELD IN TIME TO SHIELD ME FROM THE FLYING GLASS--!

BUT, WHO CAN IT BE??

WHOEVER IT IS, I'VE GOT TO HOLD HIM OFF WHILE REED AND BEN ARE IN THE SPACE TIME ROOM!

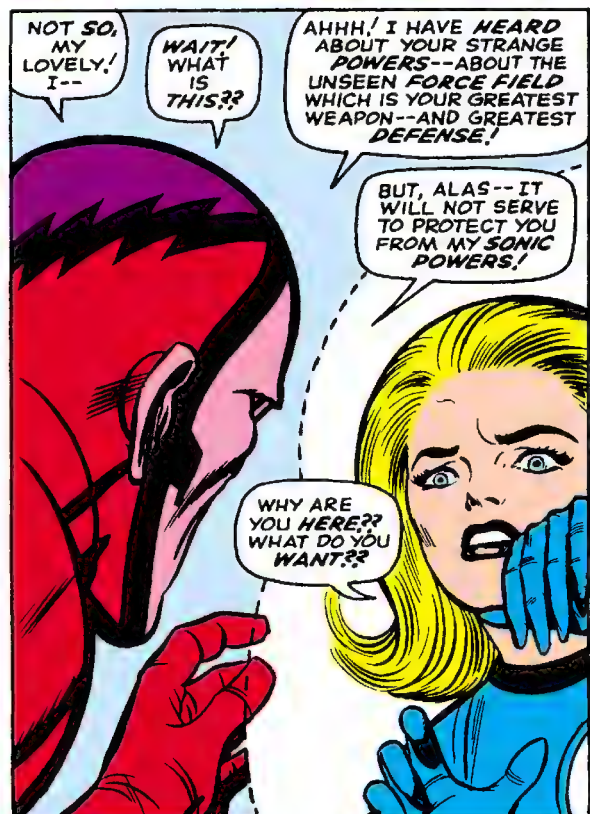


WH-WHO ARE YOU--?

I? I AM A DEDICATED ENEMY OF THE ACCURSED BLACK PANTHER--AND, SINCE THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE CHOSEN TO BE HIS FRIENDS--

THEN KLAU, THE MASTER OF SOUND, IS YOUR ENEMY, AS WELL!

KLAU!! OF COURSE! BUT--WE THOUGHT-- YOU HAD PERISHED--!



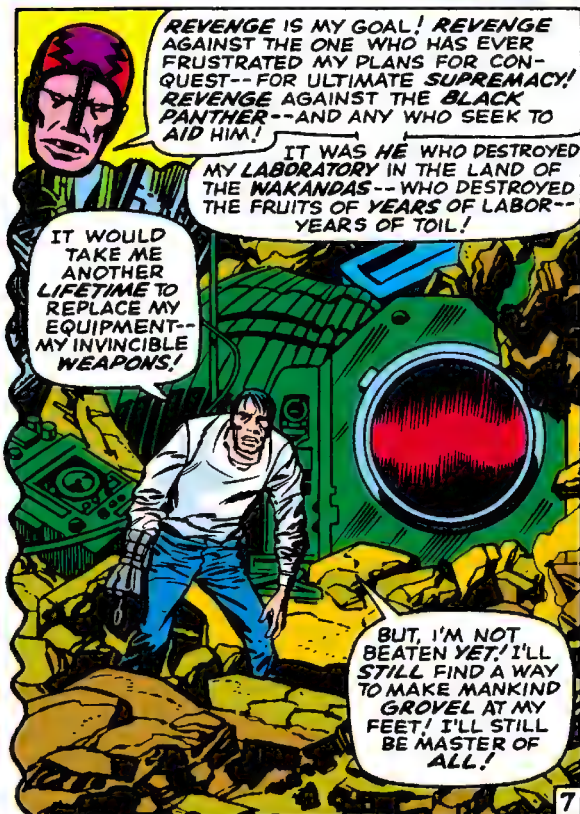
NOT SO, MY LOVELY! I--

WAIT! WHAT IS THIS??

AHHH! I HAVE HEARD ABOUT YOUR STRANGE POWERS--ABOUT THE UNSEEN FORCE FIELD WHICH IS YOUR GREATEST WEAPON--AND GREATEST DEFENSE!

BUT, ALAS--IT WILL NOT SERVE TO PROTECT YOU FROM MY SONIC POWERS!

WHY ARE YOU HERE?? WHAT DO YOU WANT??

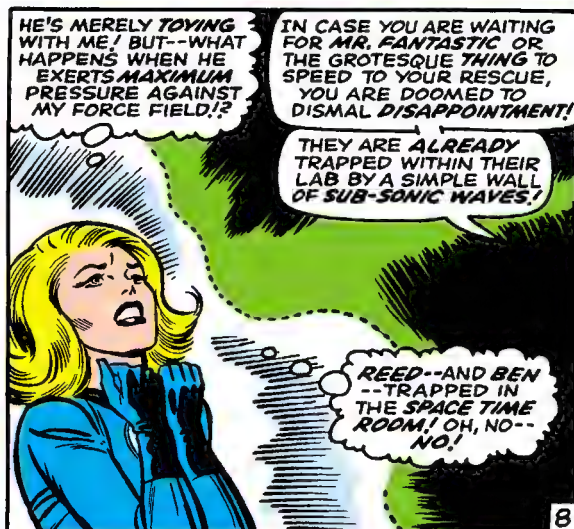
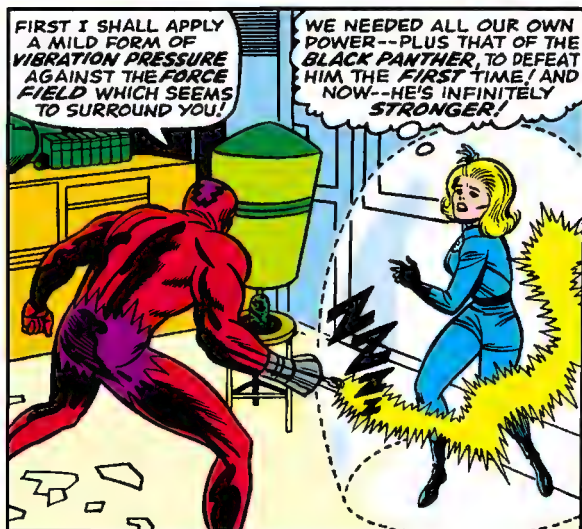
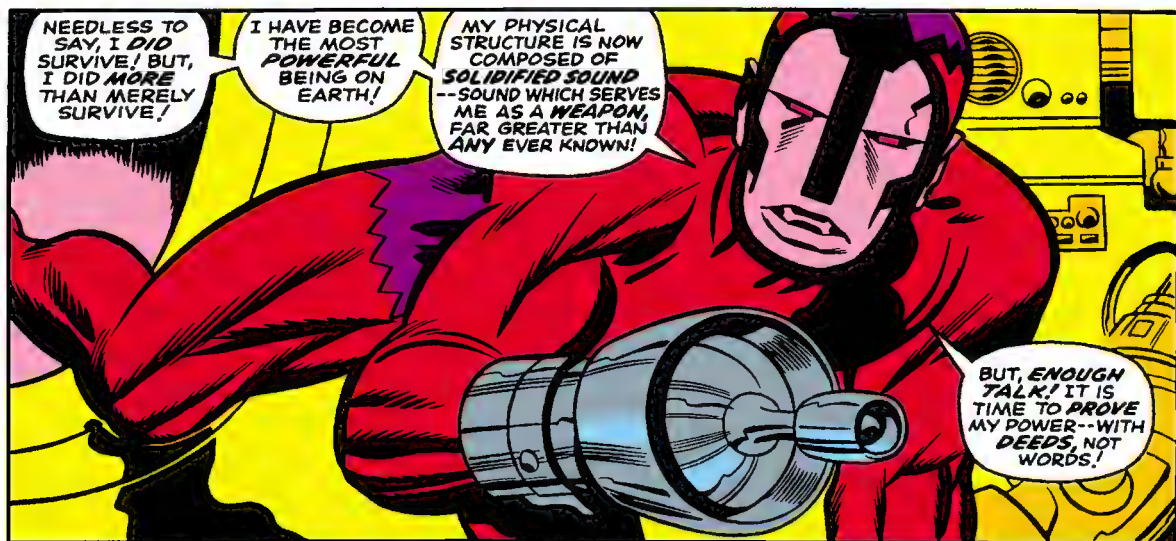
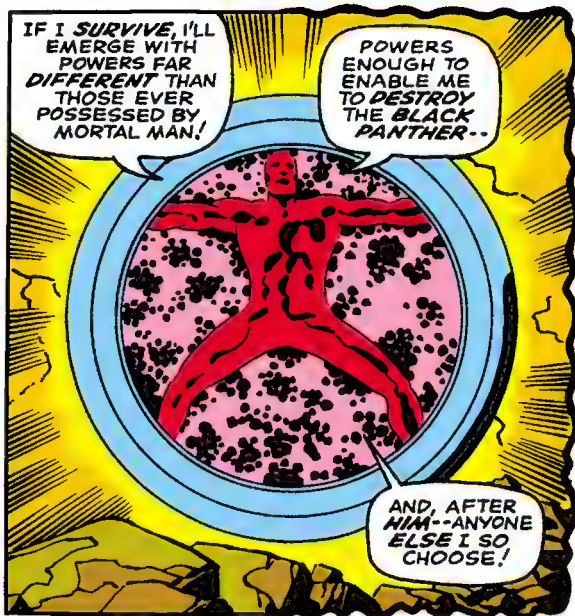
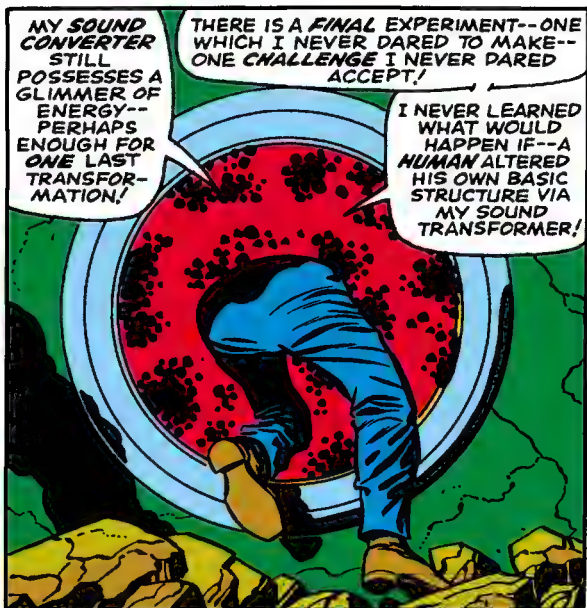


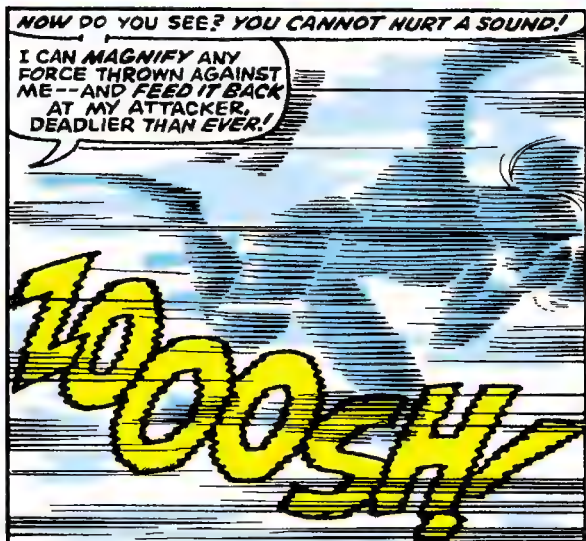
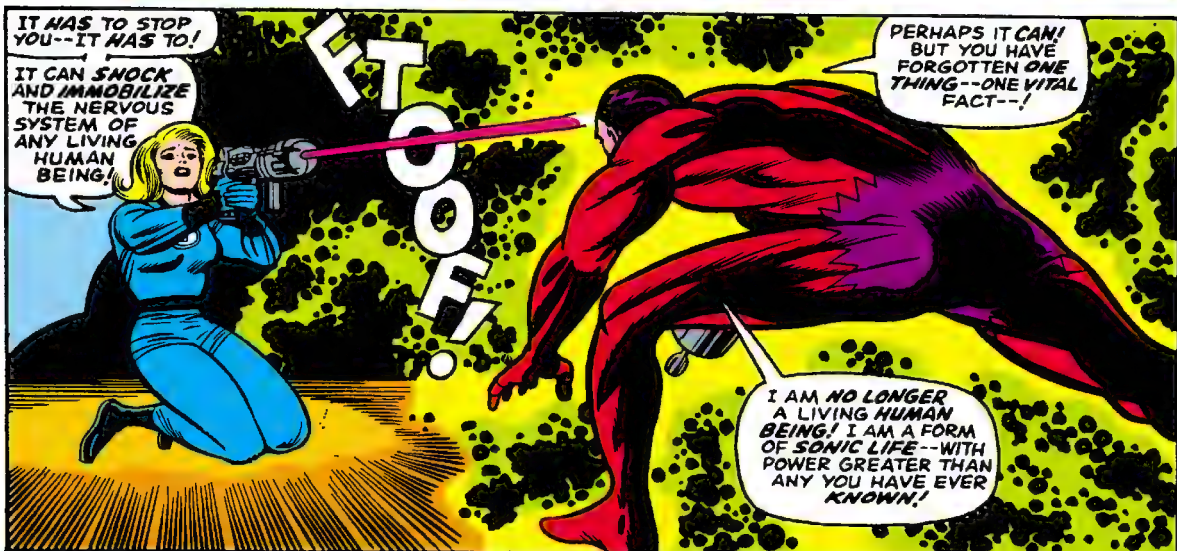
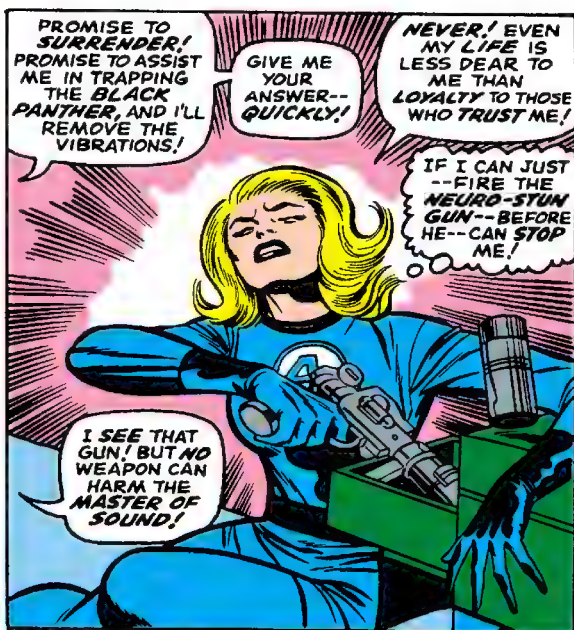
REVENGE IS MY GOAL! REVENGE AGAINST THE ONE WHO HAS EVER FRUSTRATED MY PLANS FOR CONQUEST--FOR ULTIMATE SUPREMACY! REVENGE AGAINST THE BLACK PANTHER--AND ANY WHO SEEK TO AID HIM!

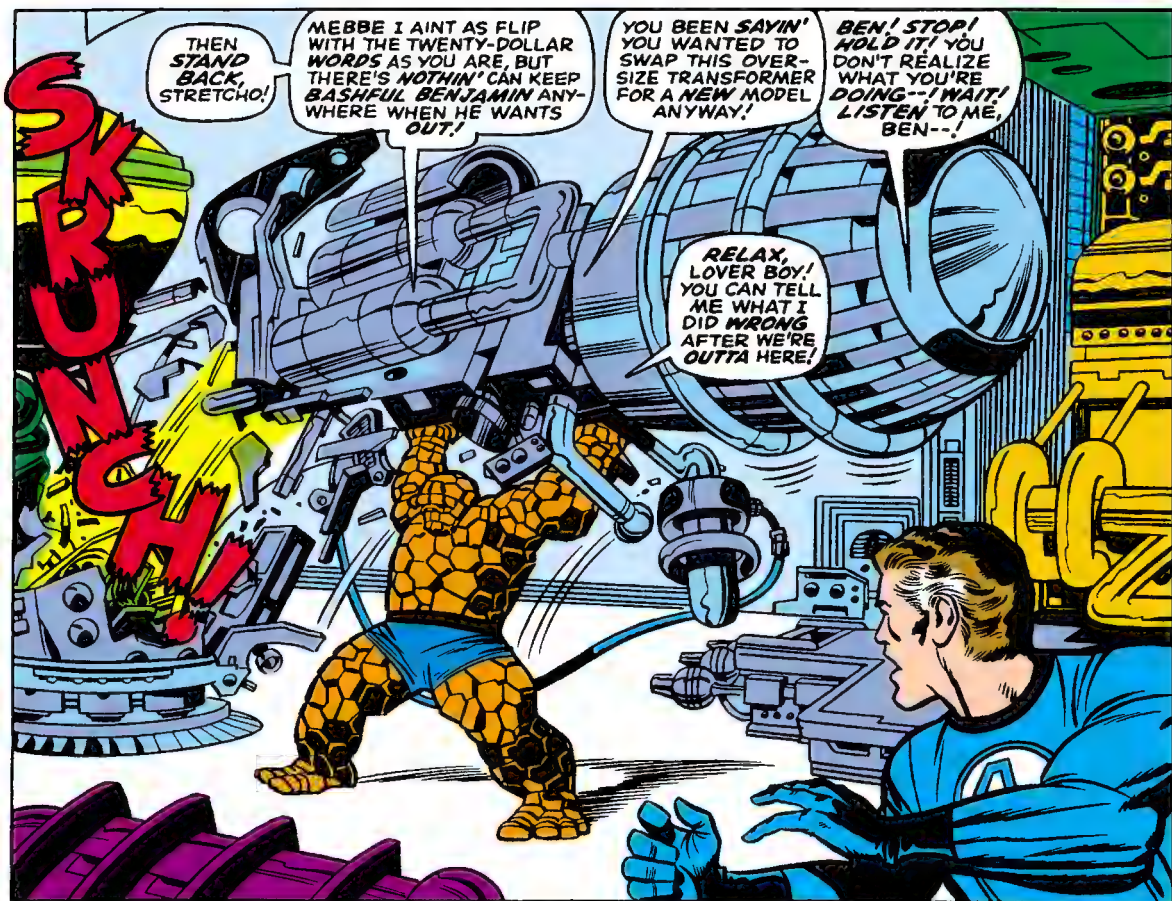
IT WAS HE WHO DESTROYED MY LABORATORY IN THE LAND OF THE NAKANDAS--WHO DESTROYED THE FRUITS OF YEARS OF LABOR--YEARS OF TOIL!

IT WOULD TAKE ME ANOTHER LIFETIME TO REPLACE MY EQUIPMENT--MY INVINCIBLE WEAPONS!

BUT, I'M NOT BEATEN YET! I'LL STILL FIND A WAY TO MAKE MANKIND GROVEL AT MY FEET! I'LL STILL BE MASTER OF ALL!







THEN
**STAND
BACK,
STRETCHO!**

MEBBE I AINT AS FLIP
WITH THE TWENTY-DOLLAR
WORDS AS YOU ARE, BUT
THERE'S **NOTHIN'** CAN KEEP
BASHFUL BENJAMIN ANY-
WHERE WHEN HE WANTS
OUT!

YOU BEEN SAYIN'
YOU WANTED TO
SWAP THIS OVER-
SIZE TRANSFORMER
FOR A NEW MODEL
ANYWAY!

BEN! STOP!
HOLD IT! YOU
DON'T REALIZE
WHAT YOU'RE
DOING--! WAIT!
LISTEN TO ME,
BEN--!

RELAX,
LOVER BOY!
YOU CAN TELL
ME WHAT I
DID **WRONG**
AFTER WE'RE
OUTTA HERE!

BESIDES, HOW
COME IT'S
ALWAYS **ME**
WHO DON'T
REALIZE WHAT
HE'S DOIN'?

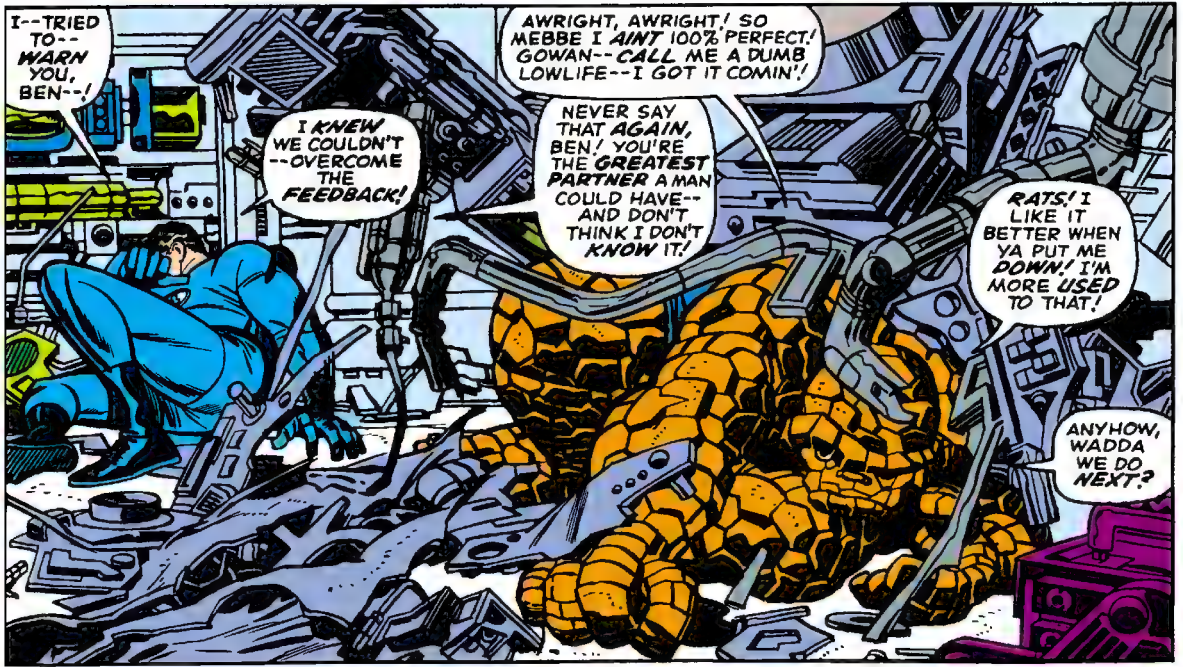
YOU TRYIN'
TO GIMME A
COMPLEX, OR
SOMETHIN'??

I JUST REMEMBERED!
WE FOUGHT SOME-
ONE WITH **SONIC**
POWER ONLY
RECENTLY--! IF THERE'S
A **FEEDBACK--!**

YOU'N YER BIG
MOUTH!

YA PUT A
BLASTED
WHAMMY
ON US!

COOSH!



I--TRIED TO--
WARN
YOU,
BEN--!

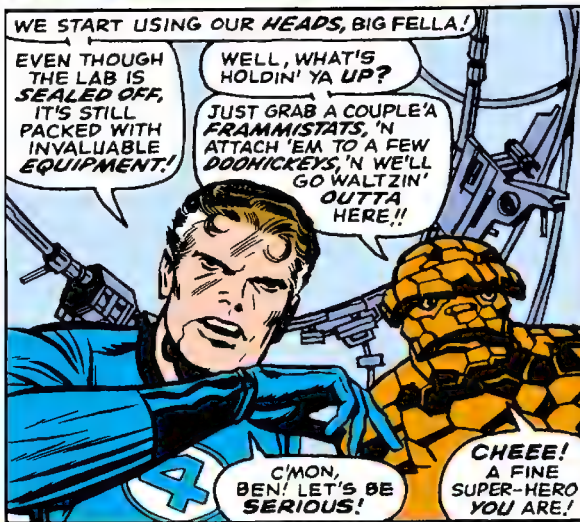
I **KNEW**
WE COULDN'T
--OVERCOME
THE
FEEDBACK!

AWRIGHT, AWRIGHT! SO
MEBBE I **AIN'T** 100% PERFECT!
GOWAN--CALL ME A DUMB
LOWLIFE--I GOT IT COMIN'!

NEVER SAY
THAT AGAIN,
BEN! YOU'RE
THE **GREATEST**
PARTNER A MAN
COULD HAVE--
AND DON'T
THINK I DON'T
KNOW IT!

RATS! I
LIKE IT
BETTER WHEN
YA PUT ME
DOWN! I'M
MORE USED
TO THAT!

ANYHOW,
WADDA
WE DO
NEXT?



WE START USING OUR **HEADS**, BIG FELLA!

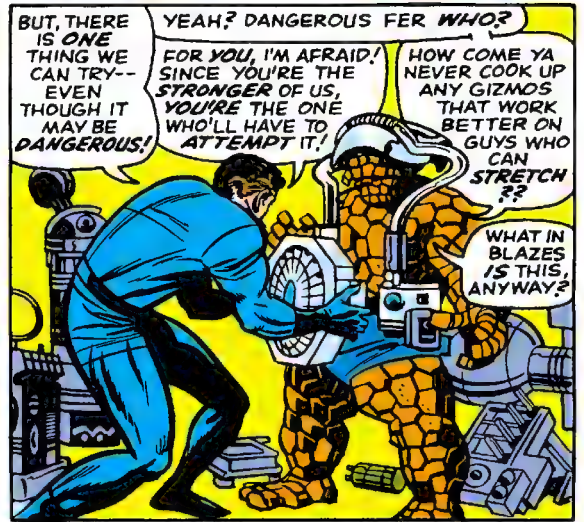
EVEN THOUGH
THE LAB IS
SEALED OFF,
IT'S STILL
PACKED WITH
INVALUABLE
EQUIPMENT!

WELL, WHAT'S
HOLDIN' YA UP?

JUST GRAB A COUPLE'A
FRAMMISTATS, 'N
ATTACH 'EM TO A FEW
DOONICKES, 'N WE'LL
GO WALTZIN'
OUTTA
HERE!!

C'MON,
BEN! LET'S BE
SERIOUS!

CHEEE!
A FINE
SUPER-HERO
YOU ARE!



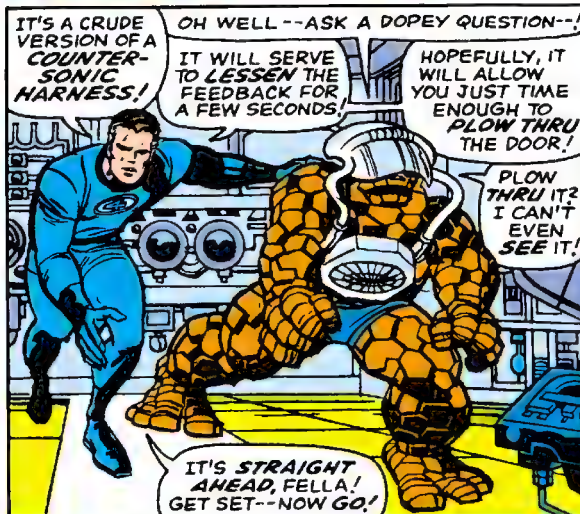
BUT, THERE
IS **ONE**
THING WE
CAN TRY--
EVEN
THOUGH IT
MAY BE
DANGEROUS!

YEAH? DANGEROUS FER **WHO?**

FOR YOU, I'M AFRAID!
SINCE YOU'RE THE
STRONGER OF US,
YOU'RE THE ONE
WHO'LL HAVE TO
ATTEMPT IT!

HOW COME YA
NEVER COOK UP
ANY GIZMOS
THAT WORK
BETTER ON
GUYS WHO
CAN
STRETCH
??

WHAT IN
BLAZES
IS THIS,
ANYWAY?



IT'S A CRUDE
VERSION OF A
**COUNTER-
SONIC**
HARNES!

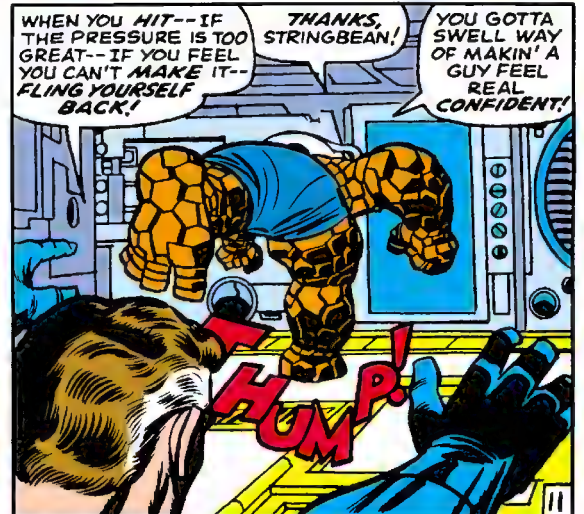
OH WELL--ASK A DOPEY QUESTION--!

IT WILL SERVE TO
LESSEN THE
FEEDBACK FOR
A FEW SECONDS!

HOPEFULLY, IT
WILL ALLOW
YOU JUST TIME
ENOUGH TO
PLOW THRU
THE DOOR!

PLOW
THRU IT? I
CAN'T
EVEN
SEE IT!

IT'S **STRAIGHT**
AHEAD, FELLA!
GET SET--NOW GO!

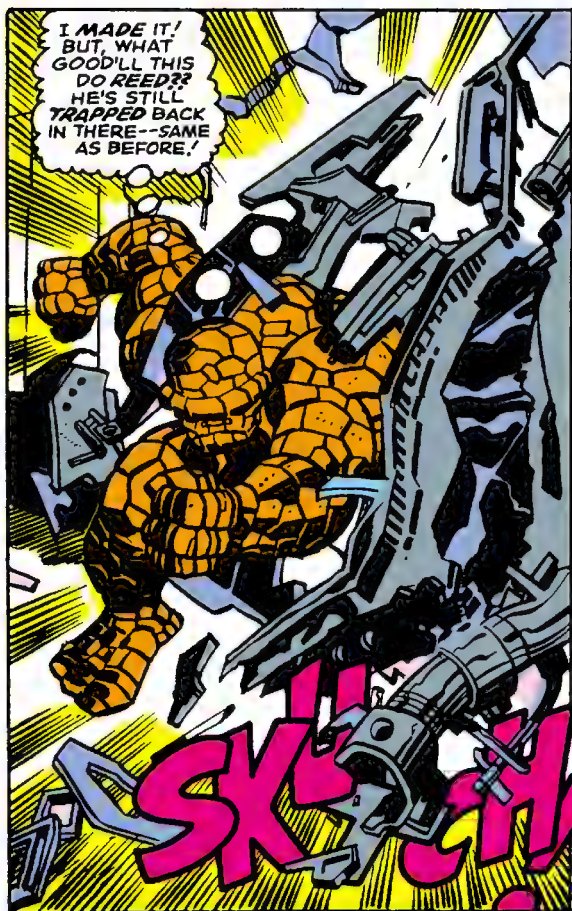


WHEN YOU **HIT**--IF
THE PRESSURE IS TOO
GREAT--IF YOU FEEL
YOU CAN'T **MAKE** IT--
FLING YOURSELF
BACK!

THANKS,
STRINGBEAN!

YOU GOTTA
SWELL WAY
OF MAKIN' A
GUY FEEL
REAL
CONFIDENT!

THUMP!



MEANWHILE, AROUND THE CORNER AND DOWN THE HALL...

NOW THAT YOU'VE WITNESSED MY INVINCIBLE *POWER*, YOU MUST REALIZE THE FOLLY OF FURTHER RESISTANCE!

THEREFORE I *COMMAND* YOU--CONTACT THE *BLACK PANTHER*!

WHEN HE LEARNS OF YOUR *PLIGHT*, HE IS CERTAIN TO RUSH TO YOUR AID--TO RUSH RIGHT INTO THE FINAL TRAP OF THE *MASTER OF SOUND*!

NO! I'LL NEVER HELP YOU--NEVER!

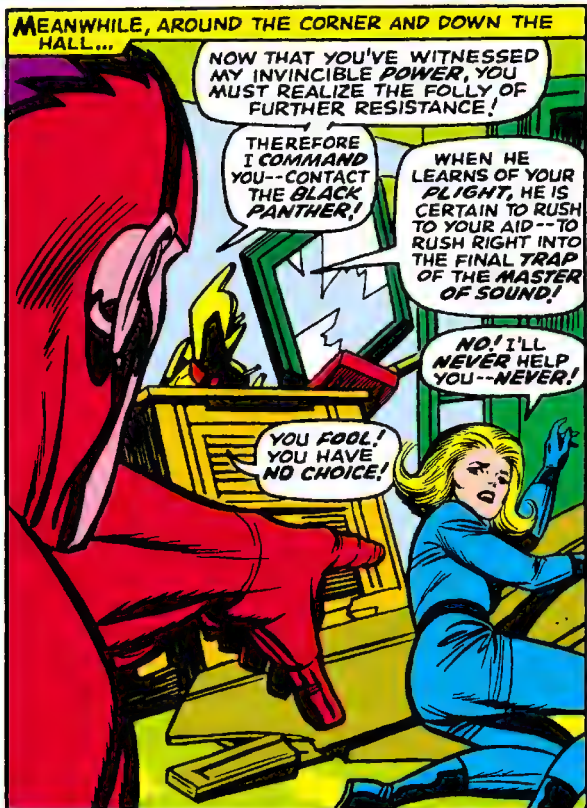
YOU FOOL! YOU HAVE NO CHOICE!

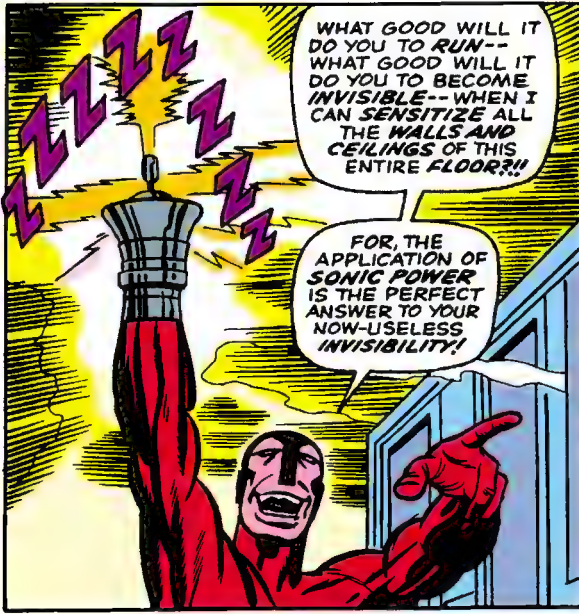
THERE'S *ALWAYS* ANOTHER CHOICE! YOU CAN'T FORCE ME TO *BETRAY* A FRIEND IF YOU CAN'T *FIND* ME! I'LL ESCAPE YOU YET!

BY TURNING *INVISIBLE*?? THEN, YOU *STILL* DON'T FULLY COMPREHEND THE AWESOME EXTENT OF MY *POWER*!

MY MASTERY OF *SOUND* ENABLES ME TO ACCOMPLISH *ANYTHING*--AND I SHALL NOW DEMONSTRATE, TO PROVE HOW *UNBEATABLE* I TRULY AM!

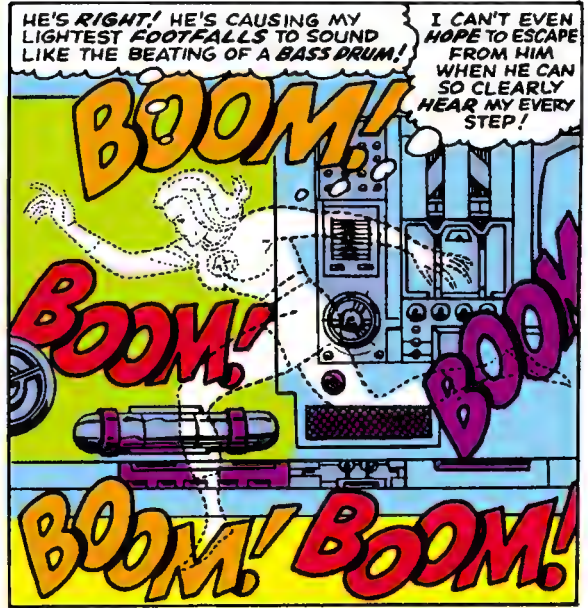
I'VE GOT TO REACH *REED*! HE'LL FIND *SOME* WAY TO OVERCOME *KLAW*!





WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO YOU TO RUN--
WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO YOU TO BECOME INVISIBLE-- WHEN I CAN SENSITIZE ALL THE WALLS AND CEILINGS OF THIS ENTIRE FLOOR?!!

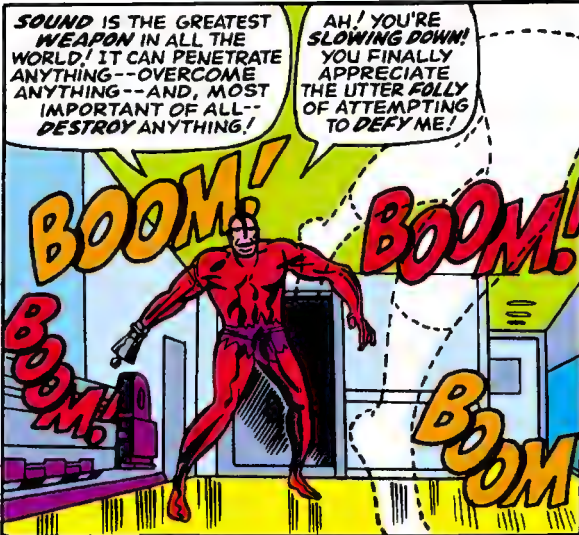
FOR, THE APPLICATION OF SONIC POWER IS THE PERFECT ANSWER TO YOUR NOW-USELESS INVISIBILITY!



HE'S RIGHT! HE'S CAUSING MY LIGHTEST FOOTFALLS TO SOUND LIKE THE BEATING OF A BASS DRUM!

I CAN'T EVEN HOPE TO ESCAPE FROM HIM WHEN HE CAN SO CLEARLY HEAR MY EVERY STEP!

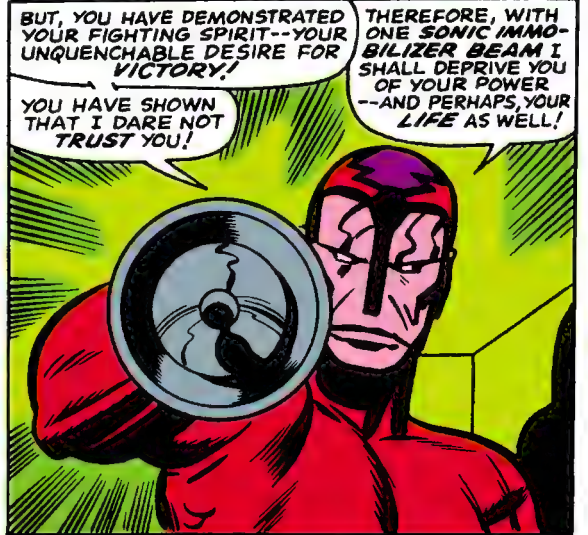
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!



SOUND IS THE GREATEST WEAPON IN ALL THE WORLD! IT CAN PENETRATE ANYTHING--OVERCOME ANYTHING--AND, MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL--DESTROY ANYTHING!

AH! YOU'RE SLOWING DOWN! YOU FINALLY APPRECIATE THE UTTER FULLY OF ATTEMPTING TO DEFEY ME!

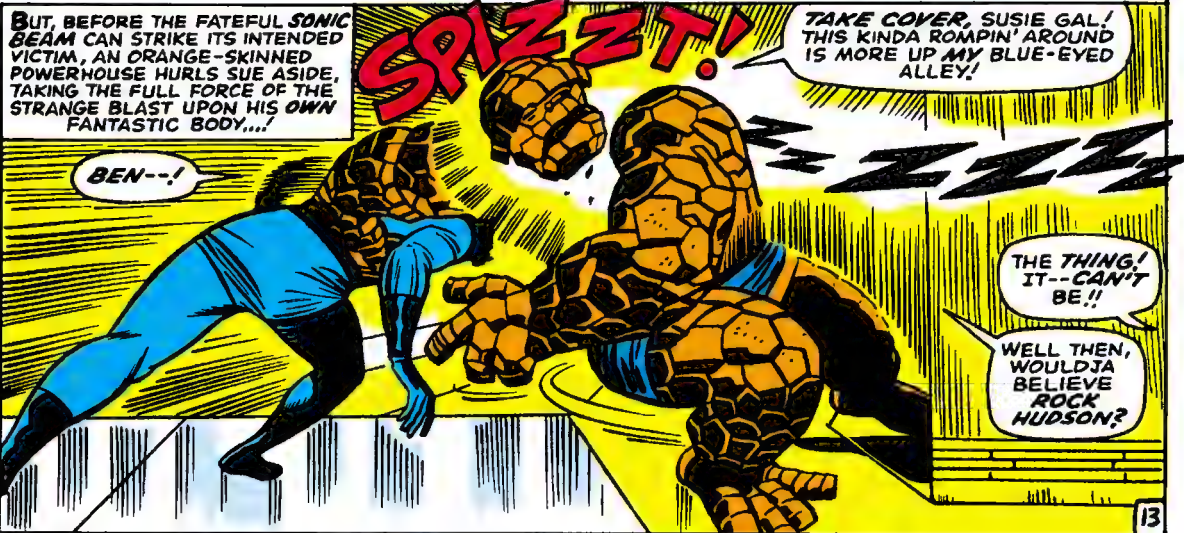
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!
BOOM!



BUT, YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED YOUR FIGHTING SPIRIT--YOUR UNQUENCHABLE DESIRE FOR VICTORY!

YOU HAVE SHOWN THAT I DARE NOT TRUST YOU!

THEREFORE, WITH ONE SONIC IMMOBILIZER BEAM I SHALL DEPRIVE YOU OF YOUR POWER--AND PERHAPS, YOUR LIFE AS WELL!



BUT, BEFORE THE FATEFUL SONIC BEAM CAN STRIKE ITS INTENDED VICTIM, AN ORANGE-SKINNED POWERHOUSE HURLS SUE ASIDE, TAKING THE FULL FORCE OF THE STRANGE BLAST UPON HIS OWN FANTASTIC BODY...!

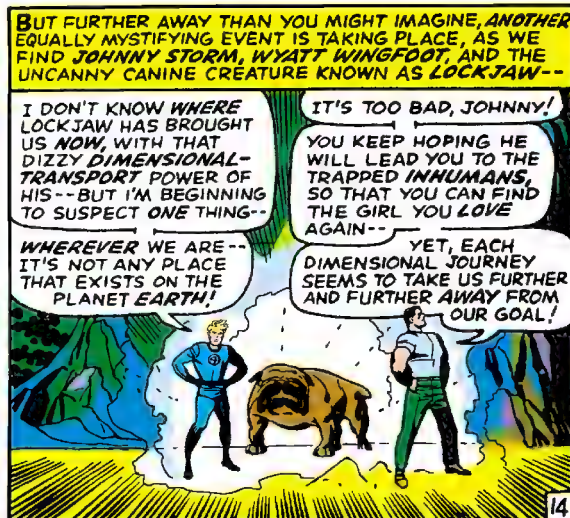
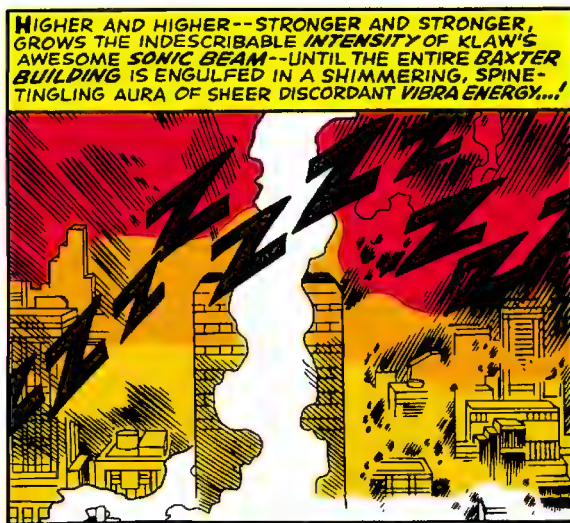
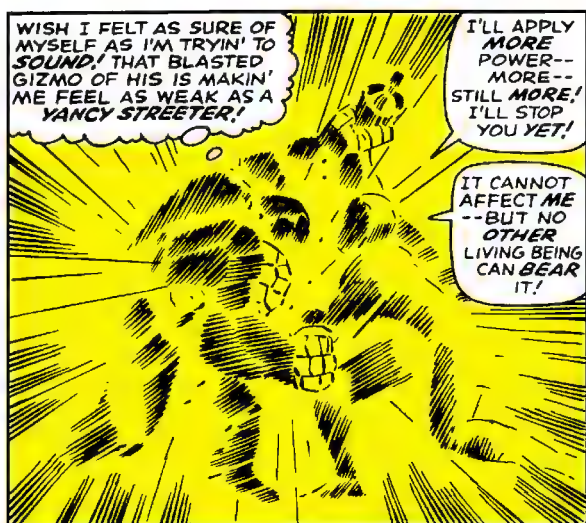
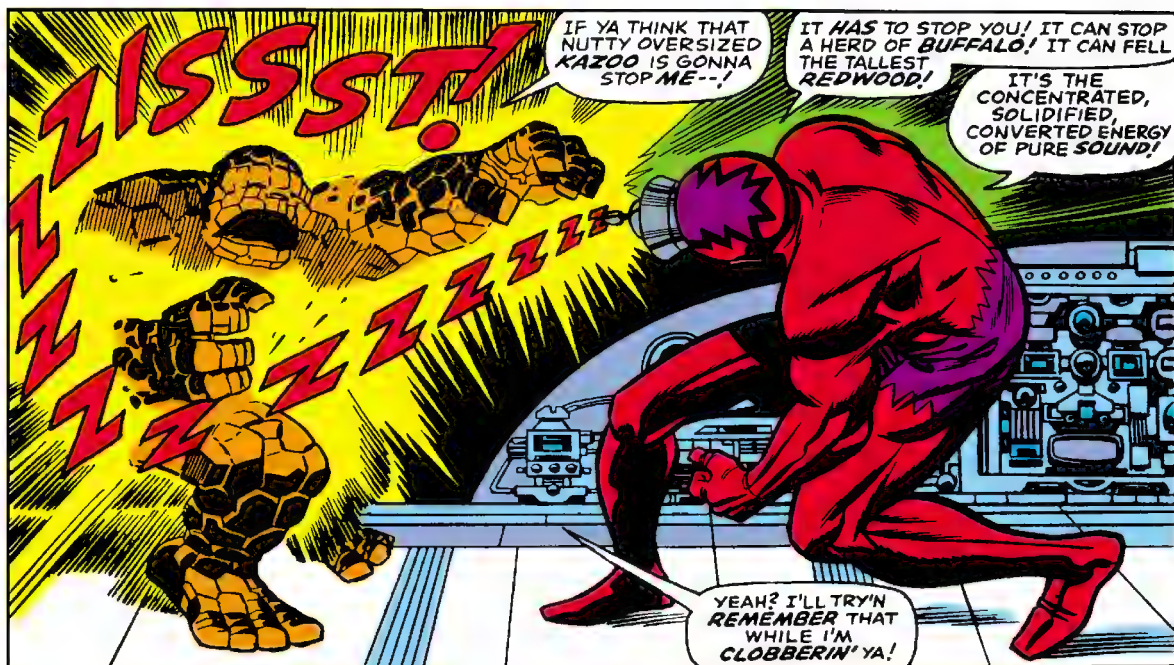
BEN--!

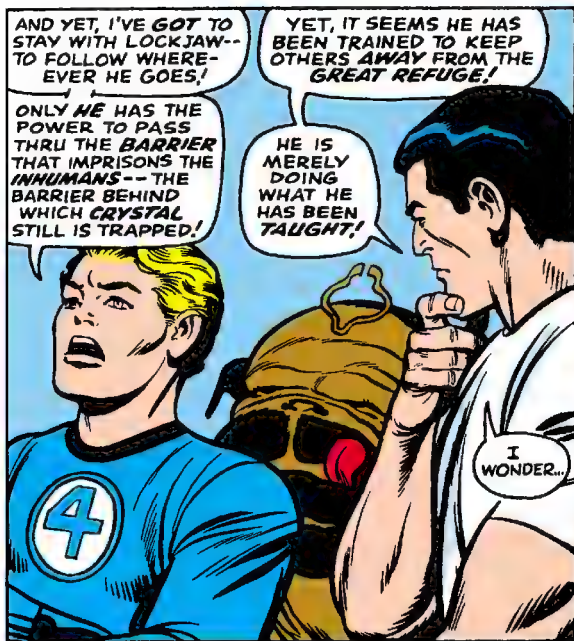
SPIZZT!

TAKE COVER, SUSIE GAL! THIS KINDA ROMPIN' AROUND IS MORE UP MY BLUE-EYED ALLEY!

THE THING! IT--CAN'T BE!!

WELL THEN, WOULDJA BELIEVE ROCK HUDSON?





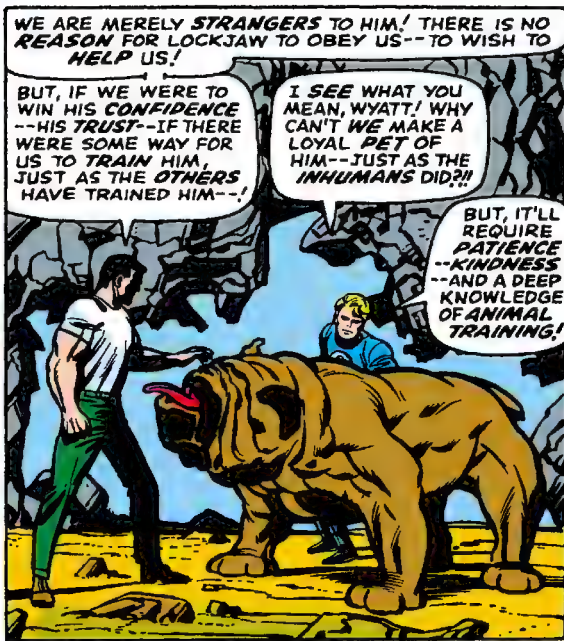
AND YET, I'VE GOT TO STAY WITH LOCKJAW-- TO FOLLOW WHERE-- EVER HE GOES!

YET, IT SEEMS HE HAS BEEN TRAINED TO KEEP OTHERS AWAY FROM THE GREAT REFUGE!

ONLY HE HAS THE POWER TO PASS THRU THE BARRIER THAT IMPRISONS THE INHUMANS-- THE BARRIER BEHIND WHICH CRYSTAL STILL IS TRAPPED!

HE IS MERELY DOING WHAT HE HAS BEEN TAUGHT!

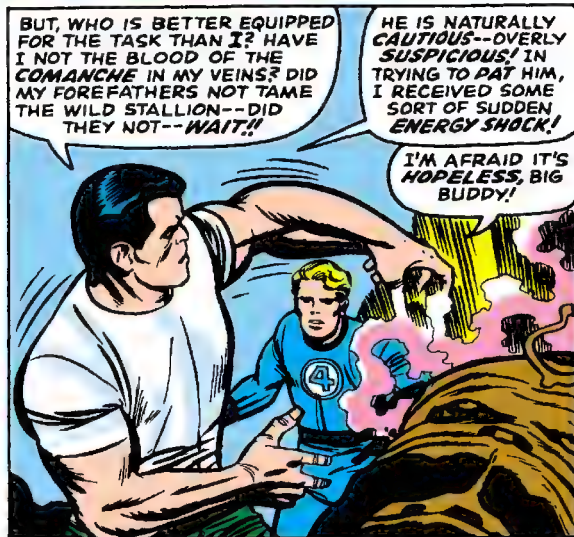
I WONDER...



BUT, IF WE WERE TO WIN HIS CONFIDENCE-- HIS TRUST-- IF THERE WERE SOME WAY FOR US TO TRAIN HIM, JUST AS THE OTHERS HAVE TRAINED HIM--!

I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN, WYATT! WHY CAN'T WE MAKE A LOYAL PET OF HIM-- JUST AS THE INHUMANS DID?!!

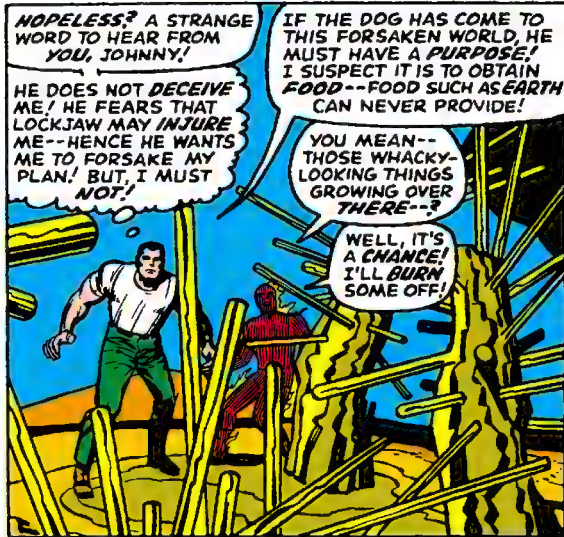
BUT, IT'LL REQUIRE PATIENCE-- KINDNESS-- AND A DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF ANIMAL TRAINING!



BUT, WHO IS BETTER EQUIPPED FOR THE TASK THAN I? HAVE I NOT THE BLOOD OF THE COMANCHE IN MY VEINS? DID MY FOREFATHERS NOT TAME THE WILD STALLION-- DID THEY NOT-- WAIT!!

HE IS NATURALLY CAUTIOUS-- OVERLY SUSPICIOUS! IN TRYING TO PAT HIM, I RECEIVED SOME SORT OF SUDDEN ENERGY SHOCK!

I'M AFRAID IT'S HOPELESS, BIG BUDDY!



HOPELESS? A STRANGE WORD TO HEAR FROM YOU, JOHNNY!

HE DOES NOT DECEIVE ME! HE FEARS THAT LOCKJAW MAY INJURE ME-- HENCE HE WANTS ME TO FORSAKE MY PLAN! BUT, I MUST NOT!

IF THE DOG HAS COME TO THIS FORSAKEN WORLD, HE MUST HAVE A PURPOSE! I SUSPECT IT IS TO OBTAIN FOOD-- FOOD SUCH AS EARTH CAN NEVER PROVIDE!

YOU MEAN-- THOSE WHACKY-LOOKING THINGS GROWING OVER THERE--?

WELL, IT'S A CHANCE! I'LL BURN SOME OFF!

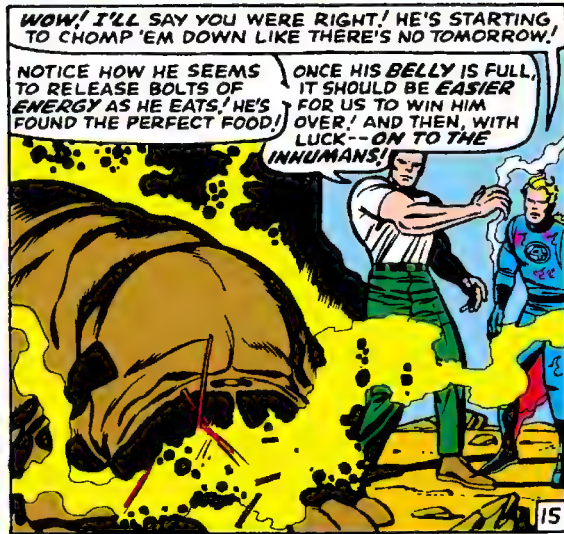


YOUR POWER OF FLAME IS TRULY CONVENIENT, JOHNNY-- AT A TIME LIKE THIS!

SURE, PAL! I'M JUST A WALKIN' TALKIN' CHARCOAL GRILL!

I THINK WE HAVE GUESSED CORRECTLY! HE'S COMING TOWARDS THE STRANGE STEMS WITH GREAT EAGERNESS IN HIS EYES!

LET'S HOPE IT'S THE STEMS HE'S AFTER-- AND NOT US!



WOW! I'LL SAY YOU WERE RIGHT! HE'S STARTING TO CHOMP 'EM DOWN LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW!

NOTICE HOW HE SEEMS TO RELEASE BOLTS OF ENERGY AS HE EATS! HE'S FOUND THE PERFECT FOOD!

ONCE HIS BELLY IS FULL, IT SHOULD BE EASIER FOR US TO WIN HIM OVER! AND THEN, WITH LUCK-- ON TO THE INHUMANS!!

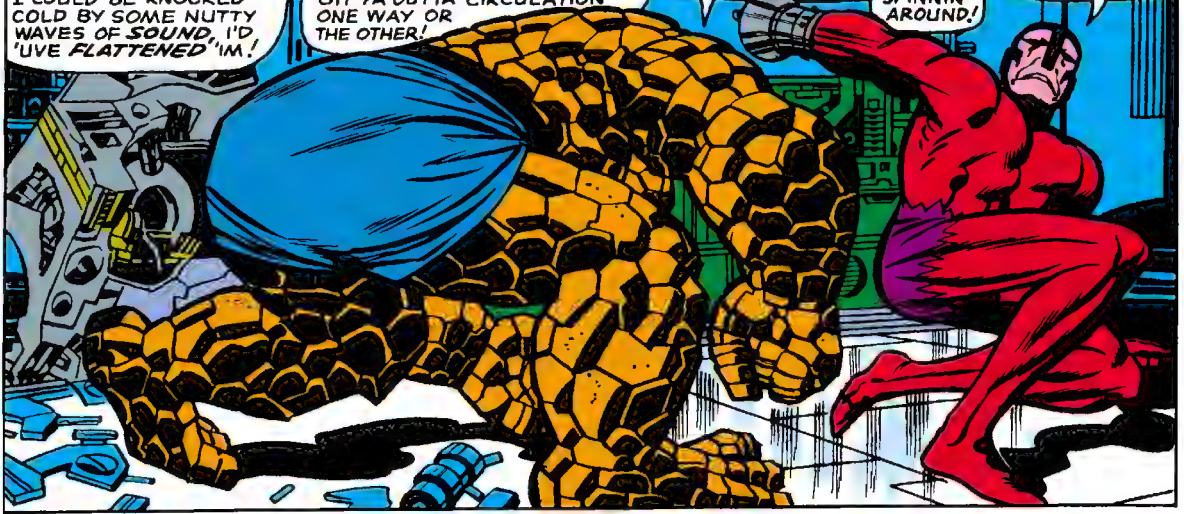
NOW THEN, SINCE JOHNNY AND WYATT DON'T SEEM TO NEED ANY HELP FROM US AT THE MOMENT, THIS MIGHT BE AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO RETURN TO FF HQ, WHERE WE FIND--

WOOO-WHEEE!
IF ANYONE EVER TOLD ME I COULD BE KNOCKED COLD BY SOME NUTTY WAVES OF SOUND, I'D 'UVE FLATTENED 'IM!

I DUNNO HOW YA DID IT, KLAU-- BUT I'M GONNA MAKE SURE I GIT YA OUTTA CIRCULATION-- ONE WAY OR THE OTHER!

LEASTWAYS, I WILL--WHEN THE BLAMED ROOM STOPS SPINNIN' AROUND!

NO, YOU LUMBERING FOOL! YOU SHALL NOT HAVE A SECOND CHANCE!

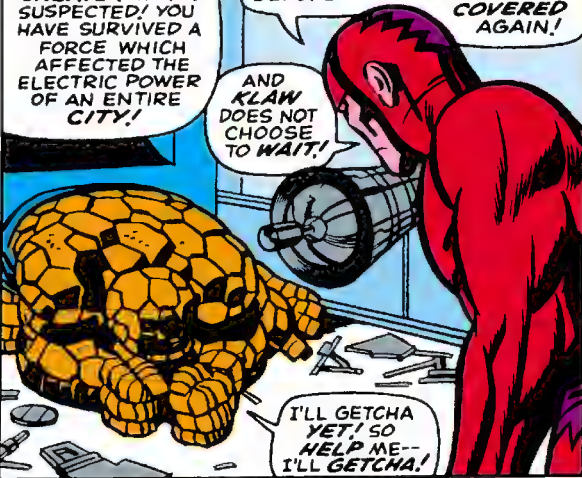


YOUR UNDESERVED STRENGTH IS FAR GREATER THAN I SUSPECTED! YOU HAVE SURVIVED A FORCE WHICH AFFECTED THE ELECTRIC POWER OF AN ENTIRE CITY!

BUT, THOUGH YOU STILL LIVE, IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME BEFORE YOU ARE FULLY RECOVERED AGAIN!

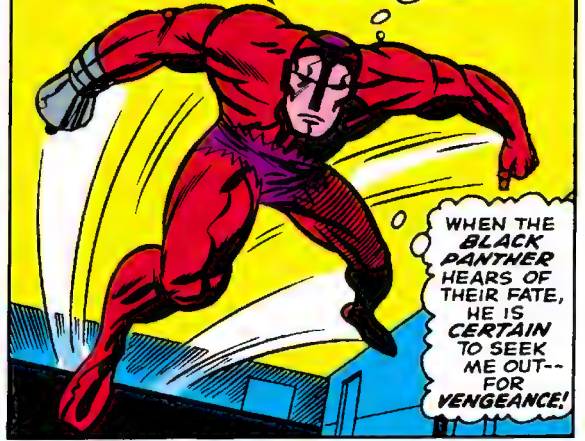
AND KLAU DOES NOT CHOOSE TO WAIT!

I'LL GETCHA YET! SO HELP ME-- I'LL GETCHA!



YOUR FEEBLE THREATS ARE OF NO INTEREST TO THE MASTER OF SOUND!

NOW, BEFORE HE CAN INTERFERE, I'LL FINISH OFF THE GIRL AND HER TRAPPED HUSBAND!



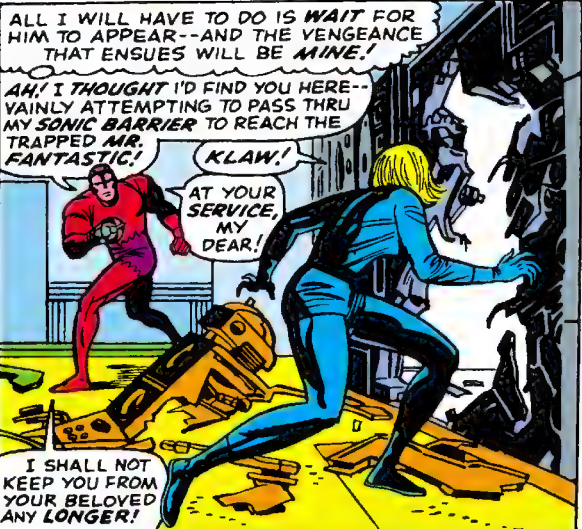
WHEN THE BLACK PANTHER HEARS OF THEIR FATE, HE IS CERTAIN TO SEEK ME OUT-- FOR VENGEANCE!

ALL I WILL HAVE TO DO IS WAIT FOR HIM TO APPEAR--AND THE VENGEANCE THAT ENSUES WILL BE MINE!

AH! I THOUGHT I'D FIND YOU HERE-- VAINLY ATTEMPTING TO PASS THRU MY SONIC BARRIER TO REACH THE TRAPPED MR. FANTASTIC!

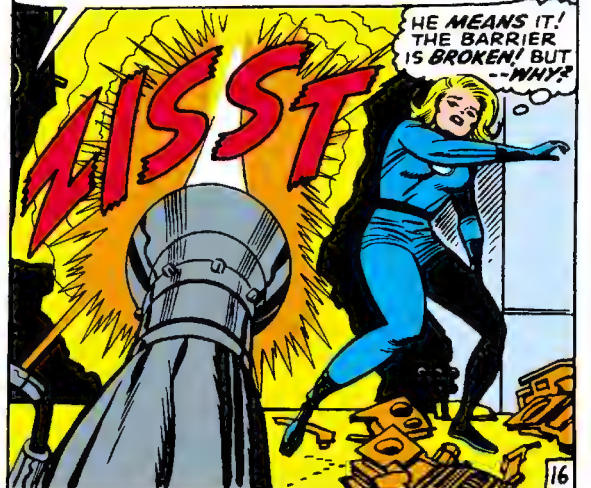
KLAU!
AT YOUR SERVICE, MY DEAR!

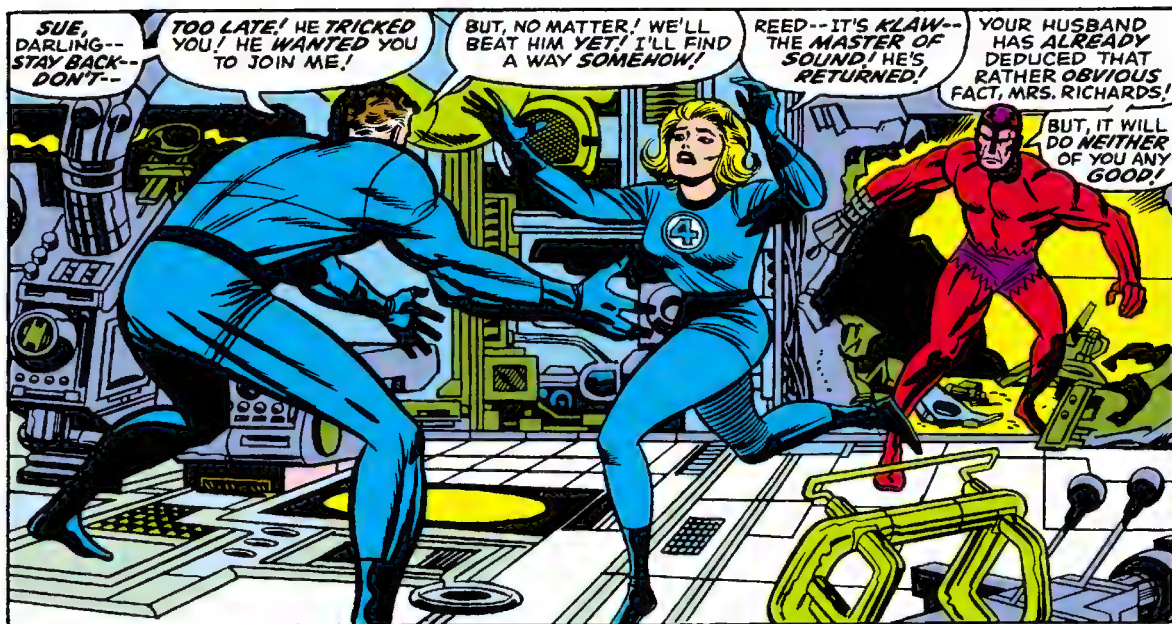
I SHALL NOT KEEP YOU FROM YOUR BELOVED ANY LONGER!



ONE SONIC REVERSION BLAST WILL NULLIFY MY BARRIER--PERMITTING YOU TO PASS THRU!

HE MEANS IT! THE BARRIER IS BROKEN! BUT--WHY?





SUE, DARLING-- STAY BACK-- DON'T--

TOO LATE! HE TRICKED YOU! HE WANTED YOU TO JOIN ME!

BUT, NO MATTER! WE'LL BEAT HIM YET! I'LL FIND A WAY SOMEHOW!

REED--IT'S KLAW-- THE MASTER OF SOUND! HE'S RETURNED!

YOUR HUSBAND HAS ALREADY DEDUCED THAT RATHER OBVIOUS FACT, MRS. RICHARDS!

BUT, IT WILL DO NEITHER OF YOU ANY GOOD!

SO! YOU'VE ACTUALLY SUCCEEDED IN TRANSFORMING YOURSELF INTO A BEING OF SOLIDIFIED SOUND!

AH, YOU COMPREHEND QUICKLY, RICHARDS! A PITY SUCH A BRILLIANT MIND WILL SOON BE DESTROYED--TOGETHER WITH THAT OF YOUR NEW BRIDE!

OTHERS TOO, HAVE THREATENED US IN THE PAST, KLAW-- BUT WE'RE STILL HERE-- AS YOU CAN SEE!

I ADMIRE YOUR CONFIDENCE, RICHARDS! TOO BAD IT IS SO MISPLACED! AND NOW-- IF YOU HAVE ANY LAST WORDS TO SAY, I SUGGEST YOU SAY THEM-- QUICKLY!

BEHIND ME, SUE! THIS IS THE SHOWDOWN!

BUT, IT ISN'T GOING TO END IN THE WAY THAT MADMAN EXPECTS --!

EVEN AS THE STEELY-EYED MR. FANTASTIC SPEAKS, A REMOTE CONTROL PACKET MISSILE ZOOMS DOWN FROM THE ATMOSPHERE, HOMING IN ON THE BAXTER BUILDING AFTER A LIGHTNING JOURNEY HALF-WAY AROUND THE GLOBE--!

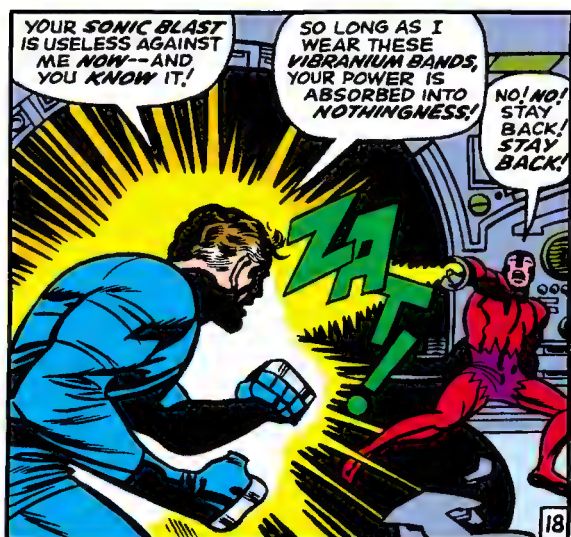
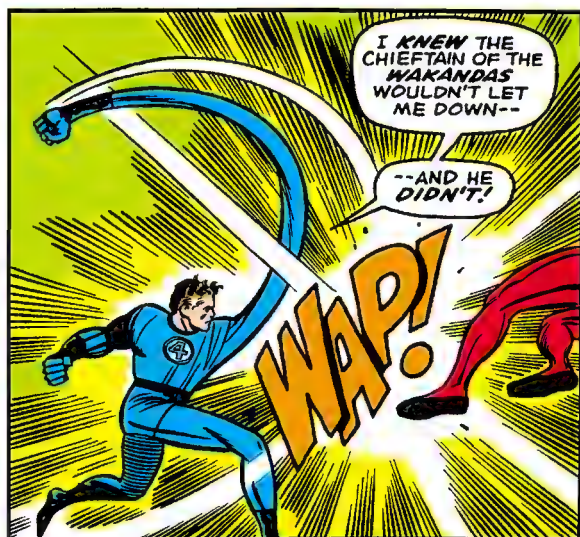
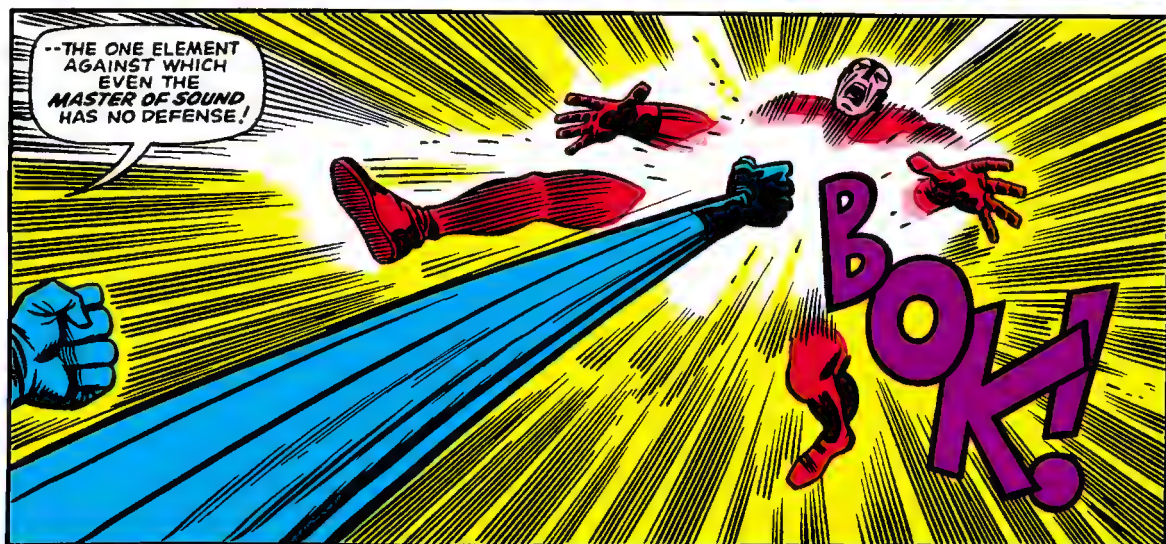
YOUR FALSE BRAVURA HAS AVAILED YOU NOTHING, RICHARDS! THIS IS YOUR FINISH--!

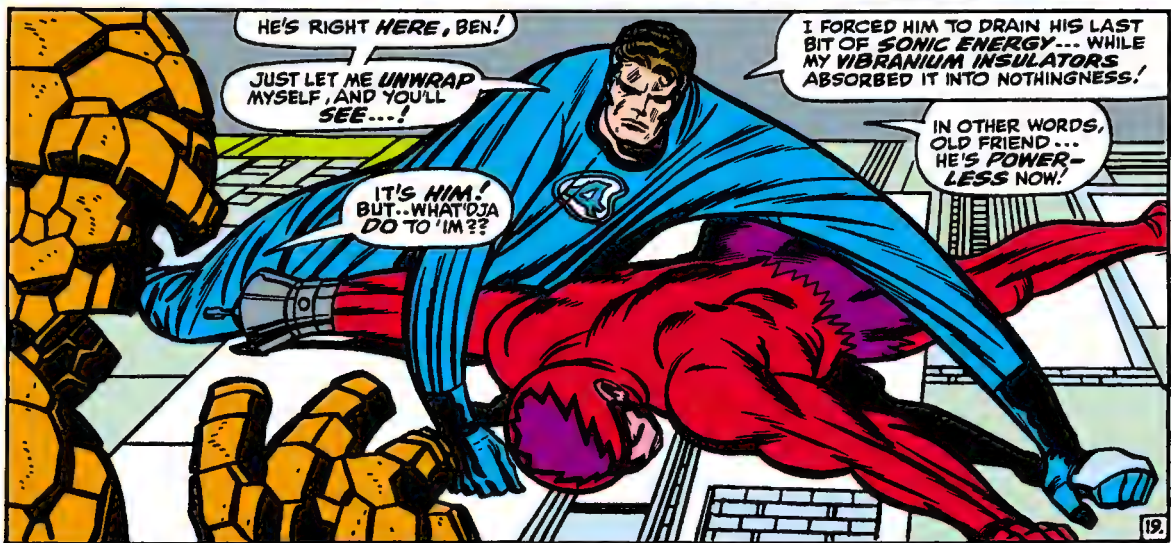
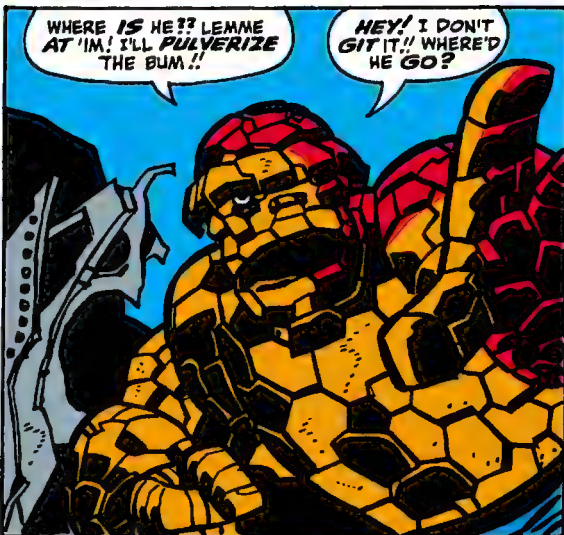
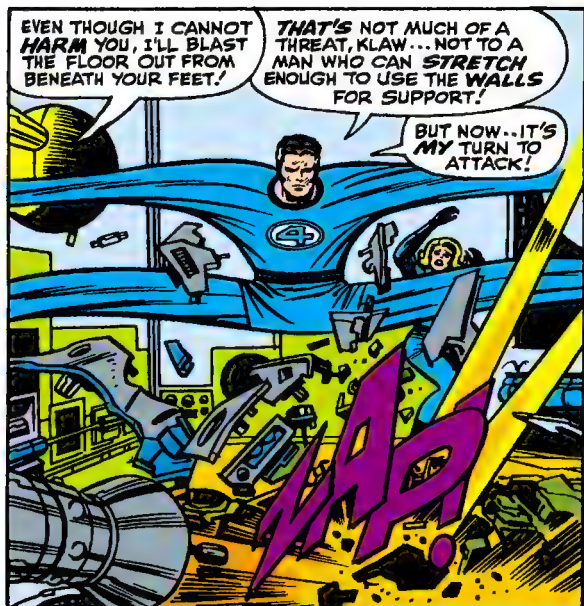
YOU'RE TOO LATE, KLAW! LOOK-- LOOK OUT THE WINDOW!

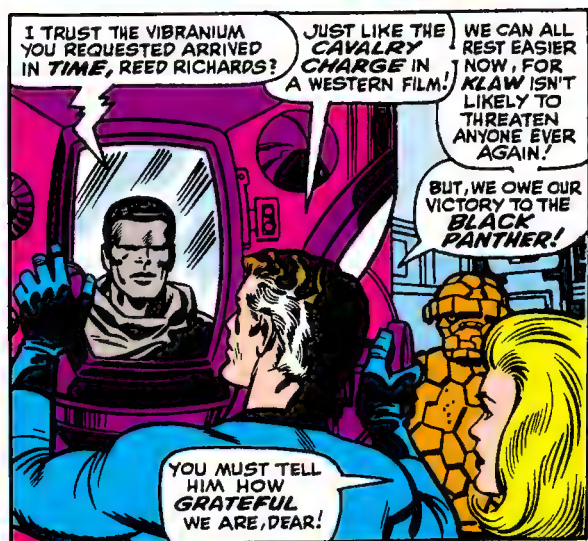
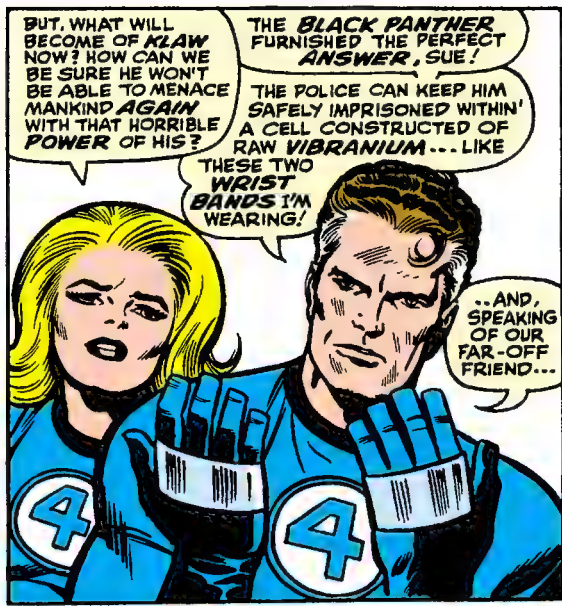
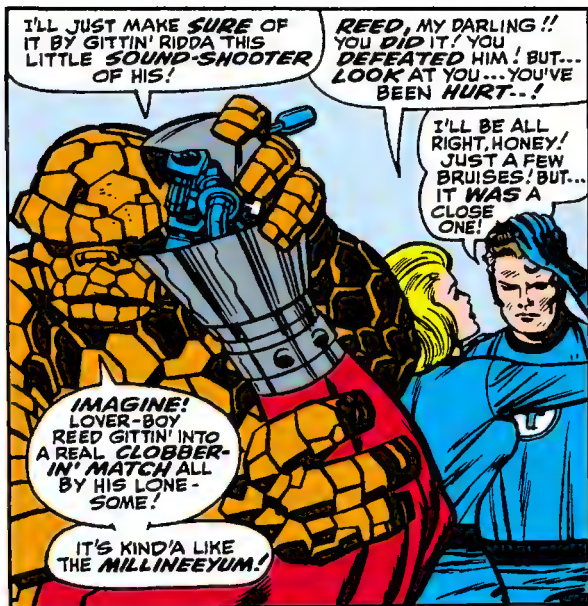
A MINIATURE ROCKET-- COMING TO A HALT-- RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU!

I KNEW HE WOULDN'T FAIL ME!

REED!! WHAT IS IT, DARLING?? WHAT DOES IT MEAN??







next
DOCTOR
DOOM!

FANTASTIC
FOUR
SPECIAL

72
BIG
PAGES

MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

25¢
IND.

#4
NOV

KING-SIZE SPECIAL!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE



AUTHORITY

IND.

Fantastic Four

THE SENSATION OF THE CENTURY!!
THE ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH
ACTUALLY RETURNS FROM THE
PAST TO BATTLE JOHNNY STORM!

ALL
NEW!

EXTRA BONUS: YOU'LL FINALLY
SEE THE ORIGIN OF THE
HUMAN TORCH, AS CREATED
IN 1939!!



PLUS...

THE MOST-REQUESTED
BATTLE
RE-PRESENTATION IN
COMICS HISTORY!
The THING vs.
THE INCREDIBLE
HULK
EXACTLY AS IMMORTALIZED
IN F.F. #s 25 & 26!
'NUFF SAID!

FROM THE ASHES OF THE PAST COMES A MIND-STAGGERING MENACE!

"The TORCH THAT WAS!"

FEATURING

THE MAD
THINKER!

LOCKJAW!

THE FABULOUS
FANTASTIC
FOUR!

THE
AMAZING
ANDROID!

WYATT
WINGFOOT!

AND THE
ELECTRIFYING ENTITY
KNOWN AS:
QUASIMODO!

QUASIMODO



CONCEIVED AND CREATED BY:
STAN LEE & JACK KIRBY
(SCENARIST) (ILLUSTRATOR)

INKED AND LETTERED BY:
JOE SINNOTT & SAM ROSEN
(Delineator) (Calligrapher)

RECITED AND IGNITED BY:
IRVING FORBUSH
(PART-TIME NON-ENTITY)

IF HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS, THEN THE TOP FIVE FLOORS OF THE FAMOUS **BAXTER BUILDING** ARE CERTAINLY **HOME** TO ONE OF NEW YORK'S MOST COLORFUL TOURIST ATTRACTIONS...THE FABULOUS **FANTASTIC FOUR**...

FAN MAIL ...PHOOEY! THE **TORCH** GETS TWICE AS MUCH AS EVER-LOVIN' **ME!** I GUESS GOOD LOOKS DON'T **COUNT** ANY MORE!

EVEN THE **YANCY STREET GANG** MUST'A FORGOT ABOUT ME!

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS, BEN! AT LEAST THERE AREN'T TOO MANY **BILLS!**

THERE WILL BE, DEAR! I WENT **SHOPPING** LAST WEEK!

NOT EVEN ONE CRUMMY LITTLE BOOBY-TRAPPED LETTER...TO MAKE A FELLA FEEL **WANTED!**

HMMM! IT'S CHEAPER FOR US TO FIGHT **VILLAINS** THAN TO LET YOU GET **SPARE TIME** ON YOUR HANDS, HONEY!

HEY... HERE'S ONE FROM SOME OLD-TIMER ASKIN' IF WE KNOW ANYTHIN' ABOUT THE **ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH!**

IS HE TRYIN' TO CALL JOHNNY AN **IMITATION**, OR SOMETHIN'?

NO, BEN! BUT, THERE **WAS** ANOTHER **HUMAN TORCH**... A MUCH **OLDER ONE...** MORE THAN 20 YEARS AGO!

'ZAT SO? CLUE ME IN, **STRETCHO!**

I DON'T REMEMBER TOO MUCH ABOUT HIM, EXCEPT THAT I SAW HIM IN ACTION A FEW TIMES DURING THE **WAR!**

HE WAS **AMAZING!** THERE SEEMED TO BE **NOTHING** HE COULDN'T DO WITH THAT **FLAMING BODY** OF HIS!

BUT, THERE WERE RUMORS THAT HE WASN'T REALLY... **HUMAN!**

NOWADAYS, WHO IS ??

SUDDENLY, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED, A STARTLING BURST OF **LIGHT** BATHES THE ROOM IN A BLINDING, SEARING AURA OF INDESCRIBABLE BRILLIANCE --!

NUTS!

IT COULD BE AN **ATTACK!**

WHAT'RE THEY FIGHTIN' US WITH **NOW...** FLASH-BULBS ??

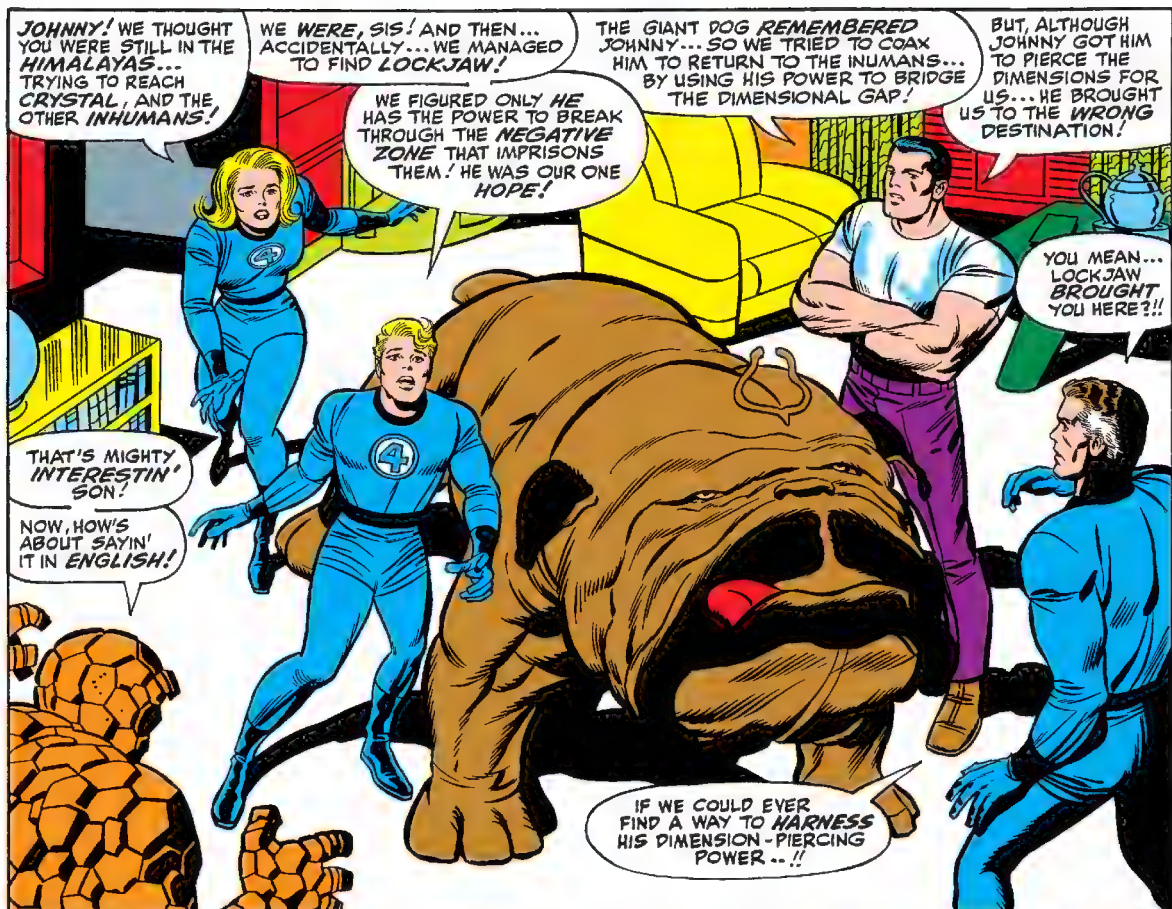
SUE! YOUR **FORCE FIELD**... QUICKLY!!

LOOK! FROM WITHIN THE **GLARE...** SOMETHING IS **EMERGING..!**

IT'S **JOHNNY !!** WITH **WYATT..** AND... AND **LOCKJAW...** THE **INHUMAN'S DOG!!**

WYATT! SOMETHING WENT **WRONG!** WE'RE NOT INSIDE THE **BARRIER!**

THAT **VOICE!** IT'S YOUR **SISTER, JOHNNY!** WE'VE COME **HOME!**



JOHNNY! WE THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL IN THE HIMALAYAS... TRYING TO REACH CRYSTAL, AND THE OTHER INHUMANS!

WE WERE, SIS! AND THEN... ACCIDENTALLY... WE MANAGED TO FIND LOCKJAW!

THE GIANT DOG REMEMBERED JOHNNY... SO WE TRIED TO COAX HIM TO RETURN TO THE INHUMANS... BY USING HIS POWER TO BRIDGE THE DIMENSIONAL GAP!

BUT, ALTHOUGH JOHNNY GOT HIM TO PIERCE THE DIMENSIONS FOR US... HE BROUGHT US TO THE *WRONG* DESTINATION!

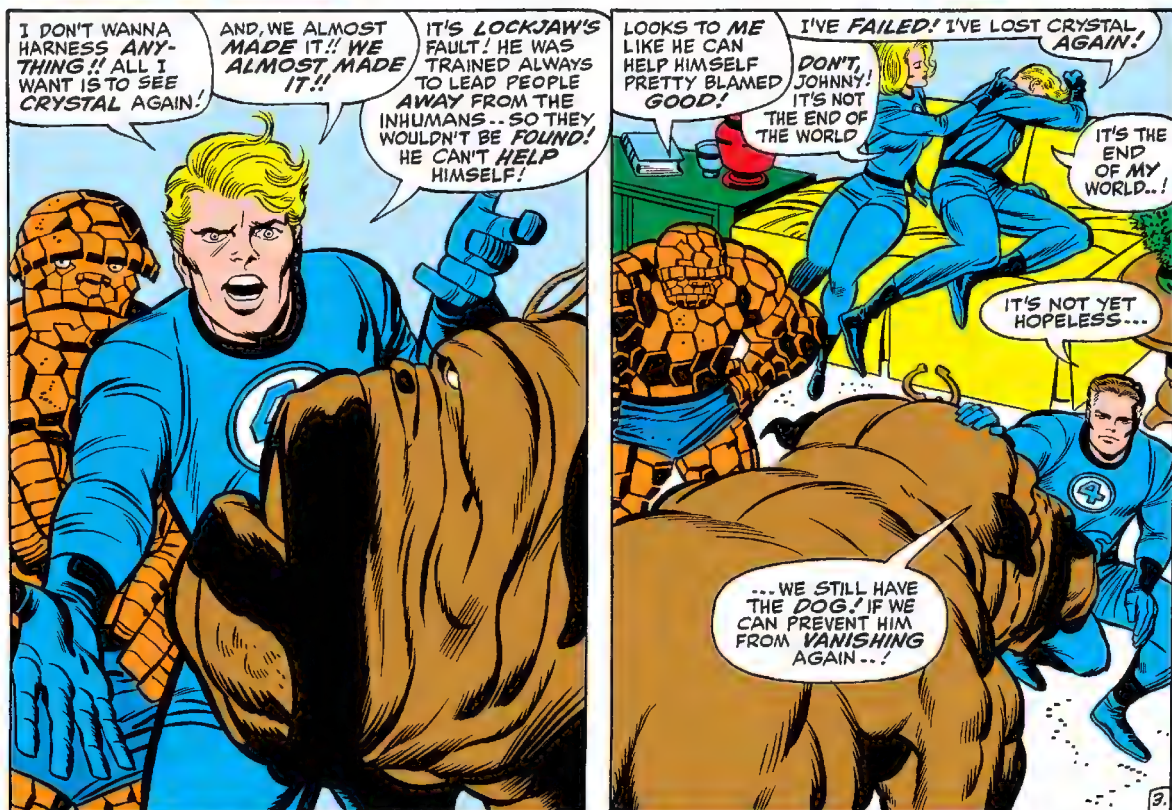
WE FIGURED ONLY HE HAS THE POWER TO BREAK THROUGH THE *NEGATIVE ZONE* THAT IMPRISONS THEM! HE WAS OUR ONE *HOPE*!

YOU MEAN... LOCKJAW BROUGHT YOU HERE?!!

THAT'S MIGHTY INTERESTING SON!

NOW, HOW'S ABOUT SAYIN' IT IN ENGLISH!

IF WE COULD EVER FIND A WAY TO *HARNESS* HIS DIMENSION-PIERCING POWER...!!



I DON'T WANNA HARNESS ANYTHING!! ALL I WANT IS TO SEE CRYSTAL AGAIN!

AND, WE ALMOST MADE IT!! WE ALMOST MADE IT!!

IT'S LOCKJAW'S FAULT! HE WAS TRAINED ALWAYS TO LEAD PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE INHUMANS... SO THEY WOULDN'T BE FOUND! HE CAN'T HELP HIMSELF!

LOOKS TO ME HE CAN HELP HIMSELF PRETTY BLAMED GOOD!

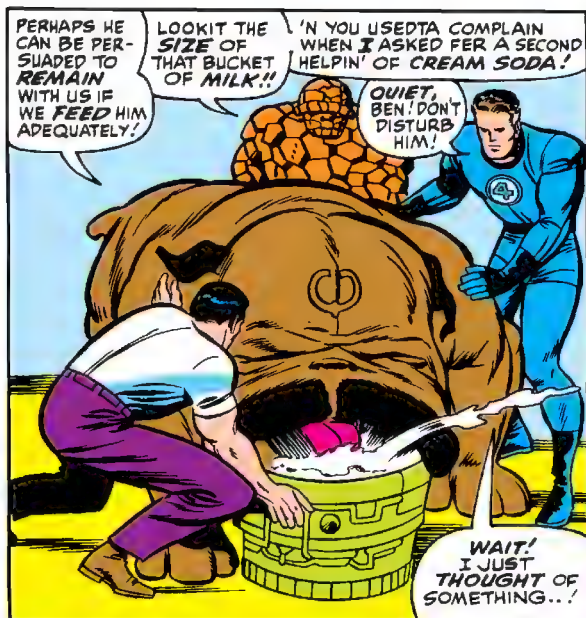
I'VE FAILED! I'VE LOST CRYSTAL AGAIN!

DON'T, JOHNNY! IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD

IT'S THE END OF MY WORLD..!

IT'S NOT YET HOPELESS...

...WE STILL HAVE THE DOG! IF WE CAN PREVENT HIM FROM *VANISHING* AGAIN..!



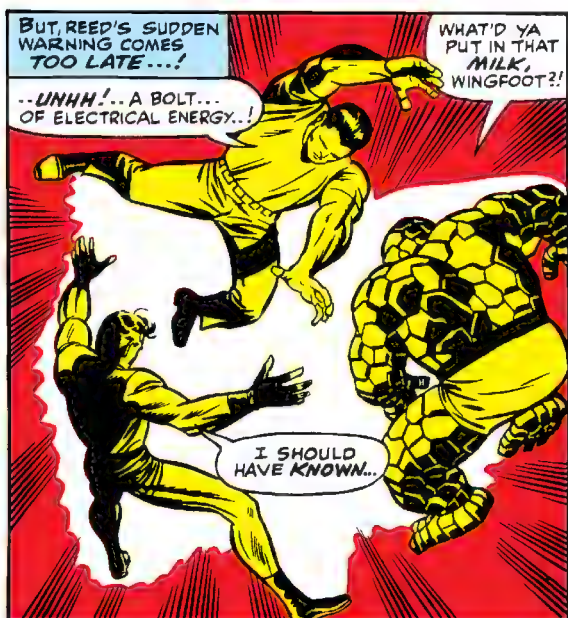
PERHAPS HE CAN BE PERSUADED TO REMAIN WITH US IF WE FEED HIM ADEQUATELY!

LOOKIT THE SIZE OF THAT BUCKET OF MILK!!

'N YOU USEDTA COMPLAIN WHEN I ASKED FER A SECOND HELPIN' OF CREAM SODA!

QUIET, BEN! DON'T DISTURB HIM!

WAIT! I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING...!

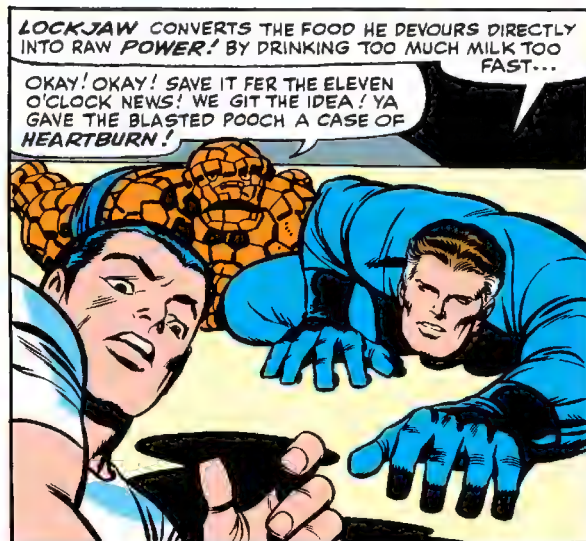


BUT, REED'S SUDDEN WARNING COMES TOO LATE...!

...UNHH!... A BOLT... OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY...!

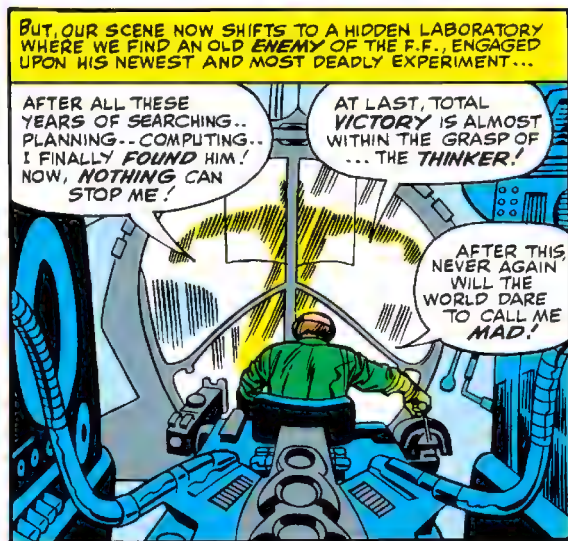
WHAT'D YA PUT IN THAT MILK, WINGFOOT?!

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN...



LOCKJAW CONVERTS THE FOOD HE DEVOURS DIRECTLY INTO RAW POWER! BY DRINKING TOO MUCH MILK TOO FAST...

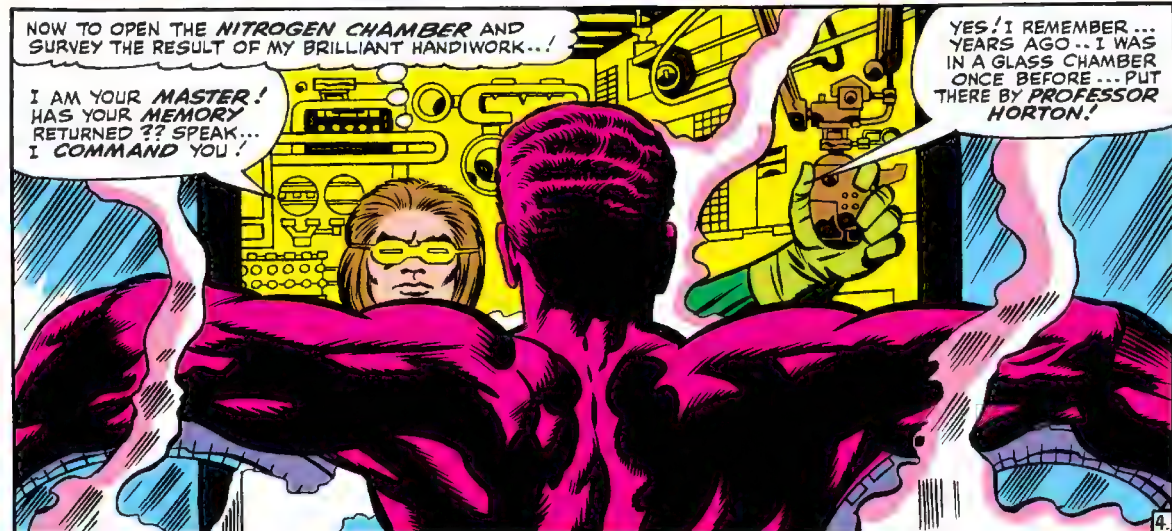
OKAY! OKAY! SAVE IT FER THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS! WE GIT THE IDEA! YA GAVE THE BLASTED POOCH A CASE OF HEARTBURN!



AFTER ALL THESE YEARS OF SEARCHING... PLANNING... COMPUTING... I FINALLY FOUND HIM! NOW, NOTHING CAN STOP ME!

AT LAST, TOTAL VICTORY IS ALMOST WITHIN THE GRASP OF... THE THINKER!

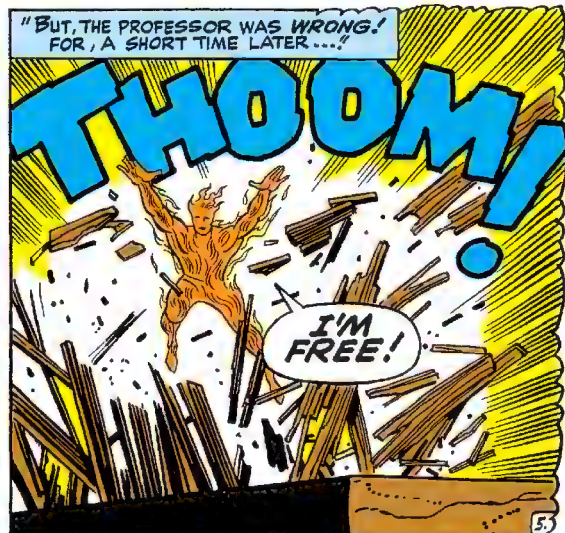
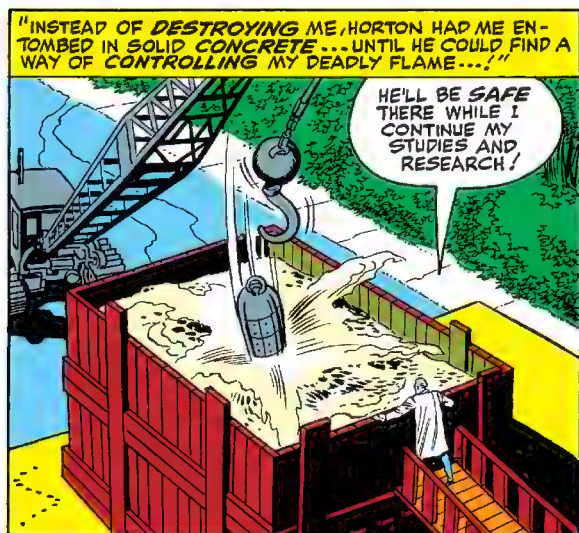
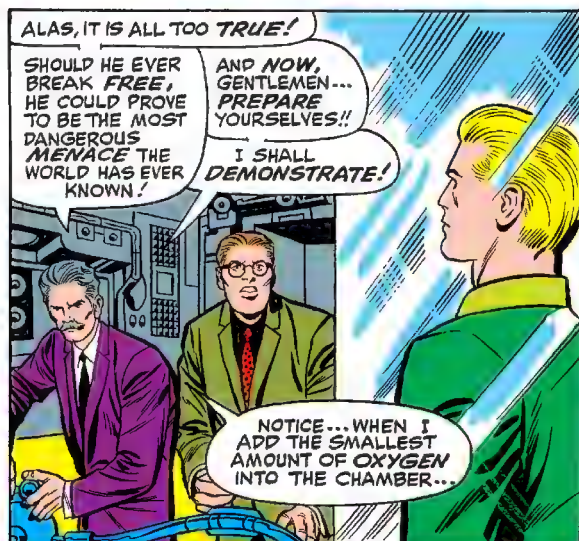
AFTER THIS NEVER AGAIN WILL THE WORLD DARE TO CALL ME MAD!

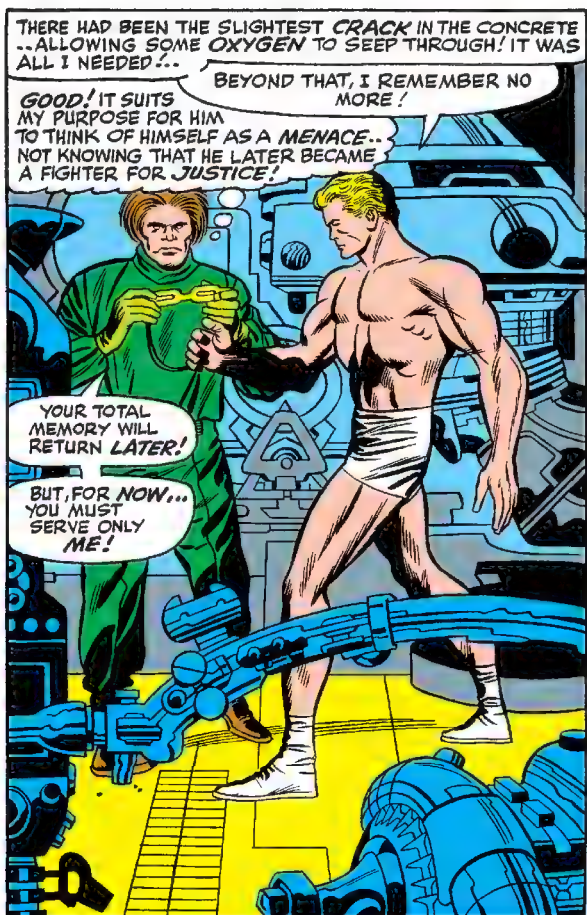


NOW TO OPEN THE NITROGEN CHAMBER AND SURVEY THE RESULT OF MY BRILLIANT HANDIWORK...!

I AM YOUR MASTER! HAS YOUR MEMORY RETURNED ?? SPEAK... I COMMAND YOU!

YES! I REMEMBER... YEARS AGO... I WAS IN A GLASS CHAMBER ONCE BEFORE... PUT THERE BY PROFESSOR HORTON!





THERE HAD BEEN THE SLIGHTEST **CRACK** IN THE CONCRETE...ALLOWING SOME **OXYGEN** TO SEEP THROUGH! IT WAS ALL I NEEDED...
BEYOND THAT, I REMEMBER NO MORE!

GOOD! IT SUITS MY PURPOSE FOR HIM TO THINK OF HIMSELF AS A **MENACE**...NOT KNOWING THAT HE LATER BECAME A FIGHTER FOR **JUSTICE**!

YOUR TOTAL MEMORY WILL RETURN **LATER**!
BUT, FOR NOW... YOU MUST SERVE ONLY **ME**!



BUT, I AM IN THE **AIR** NOW! WHY DO I NOT BURST INTO **FLAME** ONCE MORE?

BECAUSE THE GENIUS OF THE **THINKER** HAS FOUND A WAY TO **CONTROL** YOUR POWER!
NEVER FORGET... JUST AS I HAVE BROUGHT YOU BACK TO **LIFE**... SO CAN I **DESTROY** YOU AGAIN...IN AN **INSTANT**... SHOULD YOU EVER **DISOBEY** ME!

AND NOW...LISTEN CLOSELY! I HAVE A **TASK** FOR YOU...A MISSION OF **DESTRUCTION**...!

YOU DARE NOT **FAIL** ME...FOR YOUR VERY **LIFE** DEPENDS UPON IT!



AND NOW THAT OUR SPECTACULAR **STAGE** IS SET... LET THE **ACTION** BEGIN...!

I CAN'T HANG AROUND DOING NOTHING, WAITING FOR THAT FOOL **DOG** TO HELP ME FIND **CRYSTAL**!

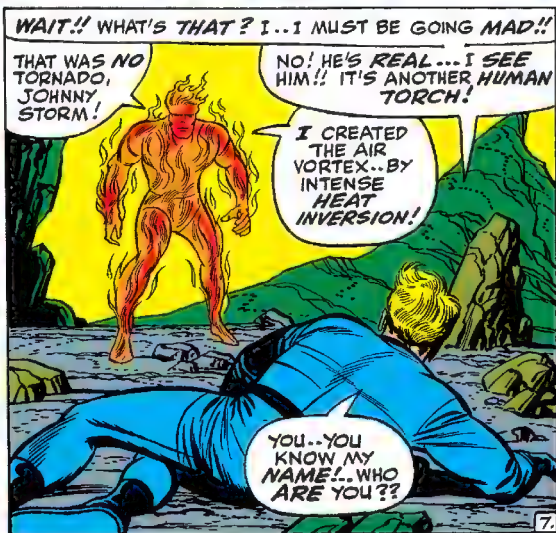
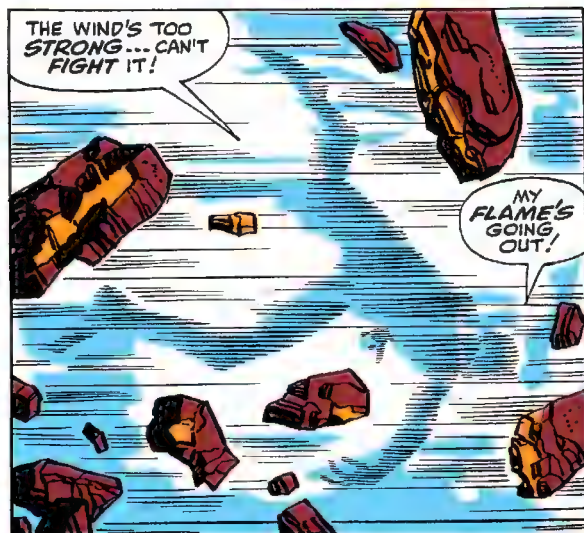
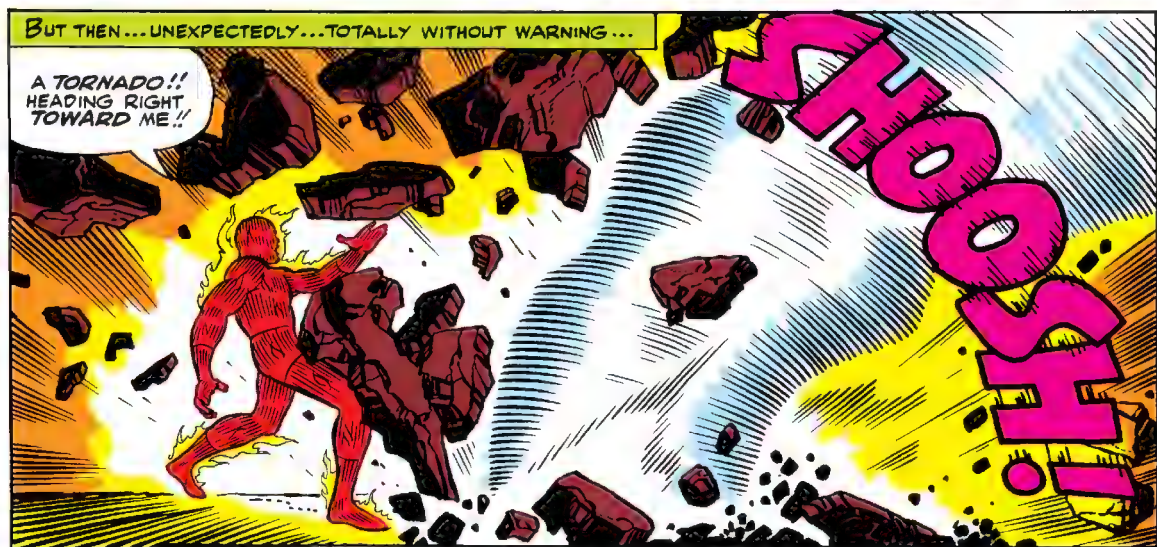
WHILE **REED** STUDIES **LOCKJAW**'S POWERS, I'VE GOT AN IDEA OF MY OWN THAT I'VE BEEN **ITCHIN'** TO TRY!

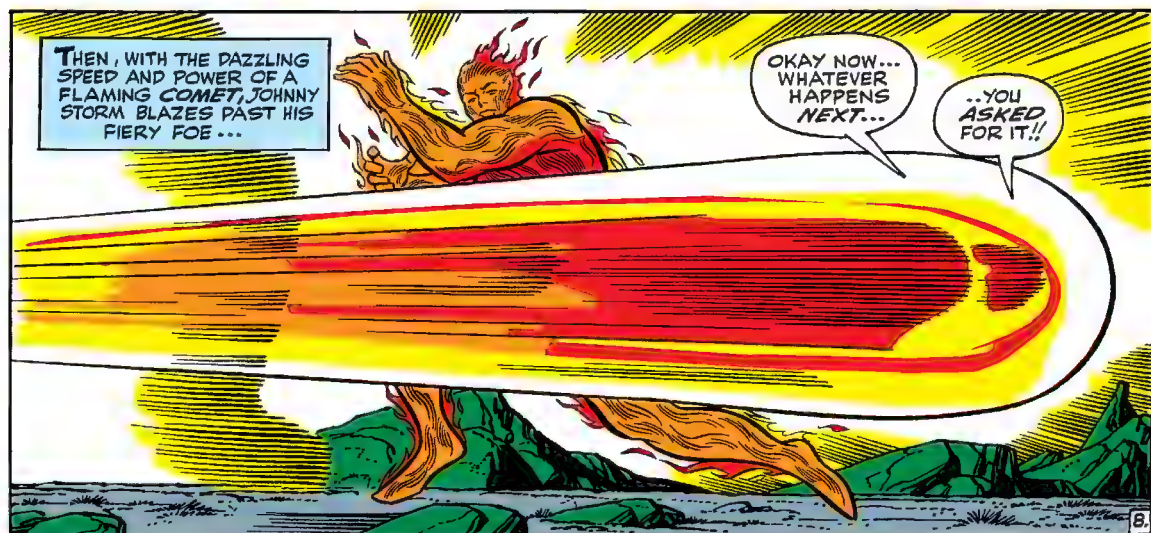
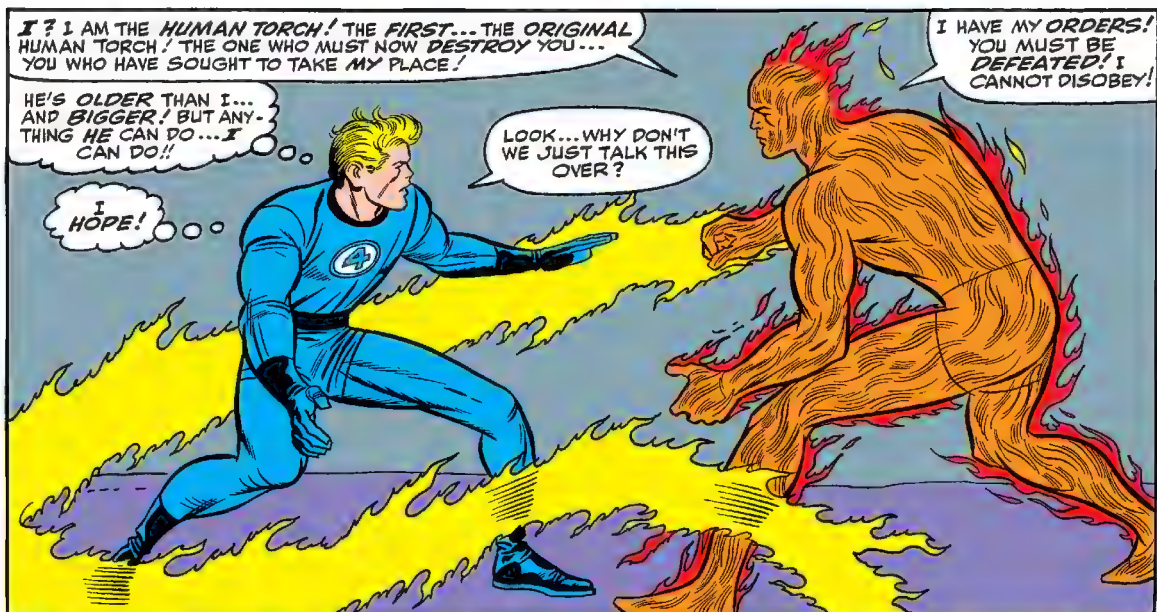
IF IT **WORKS**, I MAY YET MANAGE TO BREAK THROUGH THE **INHUMANS'** **NEGATIVE ZONE**!



BUT, I'VE GOT TO FIND SOME ISOLATED SPOT, WHERE NO ONE CAN BE **INJURED** BY WHAT I'LL DO WITH MY **FLAME**!

MY BEST BET IS THE ROLLING PATCH OF **DESERT** WHICH LIES JUST OVER THE RIM OF THE **HILLS**...!





THUS, WITHOUT A SECOND'S
HESITATION, JOHNNY WHIRLS
ABOUT IN MID-AIR, COLLIDING
HEAD-ON WITH HIS UN-
FLINCHING ADVERSARY...IN
A FANTASTIC FLARE-UP
THAT BATHES THE ENTIRE
DESERT IN A BLINDING FLASH
OF LIGHT...LIKE THE TITANIC
COLLISION OF TWO
BURNING SUNS....!



BUT, THE OLDER, LARGER, STRONGER **TORCH** IS MORE THAN EQUAL TO THE INCOMPREHENSIBLY DEVASTATING ATTACK ...

BACK, YOUNG ONE!

THOUGH YOU ARE A WORTHY SUCCESSOR TO MY **OWN** BLAZING POWER ... YOU ARE NOT YET MY **EQUAL!**

UHHH! I'M BEGINNING TO THINK HE'S **RIGHT!**

SPROOSH!

BUT, I CAN'T LET HIM BEAT ME! NOT JUST FOR **MYSELF...** BUT FOR THE SAKE OF THE **WORLD!**

HE'S TOO **DESTRUCTIVE...** TOO **UNCONTROLLABLE...** ... TO REMAIN AT **LARGE!**

THE **SEARING HEAT**, GENERATED BY OUR TWO **BLAZING BODIES**, IS CHANGING THE WHOLE **TERRAIN** HERE!

IT'S REDUCING THESE **LONELY HILLS** TO **FLAMING MASSES** OF **MOLTEN LAVA!**

UH-OH! HE'S ABOUT TO **ATTACK AGAIN!**

BUT I'M NOT GONNA BE A **HUMAN PUNCHING BAG** FOR THAT **JOKER!**

I'LL LOSE MYSELF UNDER THIS **RIVER OF FLAME** TILL I CAN FIGURE OUT A **FOOL-PROOF PLAN** OF **COUNTER-ATTACK!**

IT--IT'S **NO GOOD!** I FORGOT... THE **LAVA'S TOO THICK...** IT'S NOT JUST **SOLID FLAME...**

... CAN'T **BREATHE** UNDER HERE! HAVE TO THINK OF **SOMETHING ELSE!**

YOU CANNOT **ESCAPE** ME!

I CAN FOLLOW **WHEREVER** YOU GO!

MAYBE SO... BUT I'M NOT JUST TAKIN' YOUR **WORD** FOR IT!

THERE ARE **UNDERGROUND CAVES** BELOW... I'VE GOT TO **REACH** THEM!

THEN, SECONDS LATER ...

MADE IT!
THIS'LL GIVE
ME THE TIME
I NEED TO
CATCH MY
BREATH.

IF ONLY I
KNEW...WHERE
DID HE COME
FROM? WHY IS
HE FIGHTING
ME??

MY FLAME'S DYING
DOWN! I NEED REST..
ALL I CAN GET!

IT WAS A MISTAKE
TO USE UP SO MUCH
ENERGY IN TRYING TO
REACH NEAR-NOVA
FORCE!

BUT...HOW WAS I TO KNOW I'D
NEED MY POWER...TO BEAT
OFF AN ATTACK BY ANOTHER
HUMAN TORCH?

IF I COULD JUST
REASON WITH HIM...
LEARN MORE ABOUT
HIM...!

SO, THERE YOU ARE! I TOLD YOU THERE WAS NO
ESCAPE!

HIS FLAME'S OUT, ALSO!
THAT MEANS HE HAS
WEAKNESSES, TOO!
I'VE STILL GOT A
CHANCE!

I DO NOT
WISH TO HARM
YOU...BUT I MUST!
I HAVE NO OTHER
CHOICE!

THE THINKER
BROUGHT ME
BACK TO LIFE..
AND WILL DESTROY
ME AGAIN...IF I
FAIL HIM!

THE MAD THINKER! BUT...HIS SPECIALTY IS
ANDROIDS! THAT COULD MEAN...THE OTHER
TORCH ISN'T
HUMAN!

STAY
BACK!
LET'S
TALK IT
OVER!
MAYBE
I CAN
HELP
YOU...!

NO! I MUST
ACCOMPLISH
MY TASK!

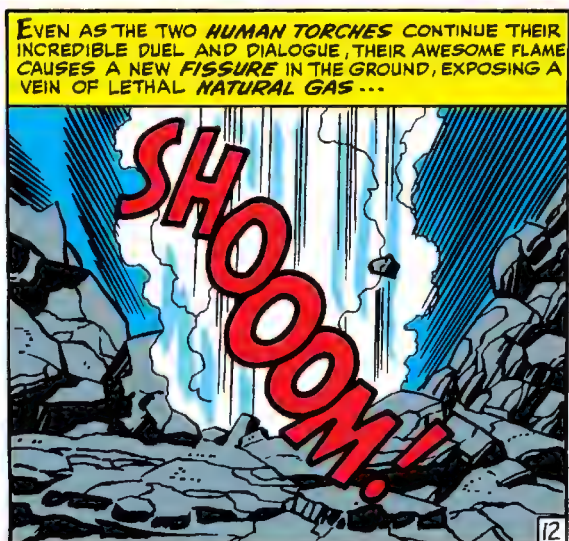
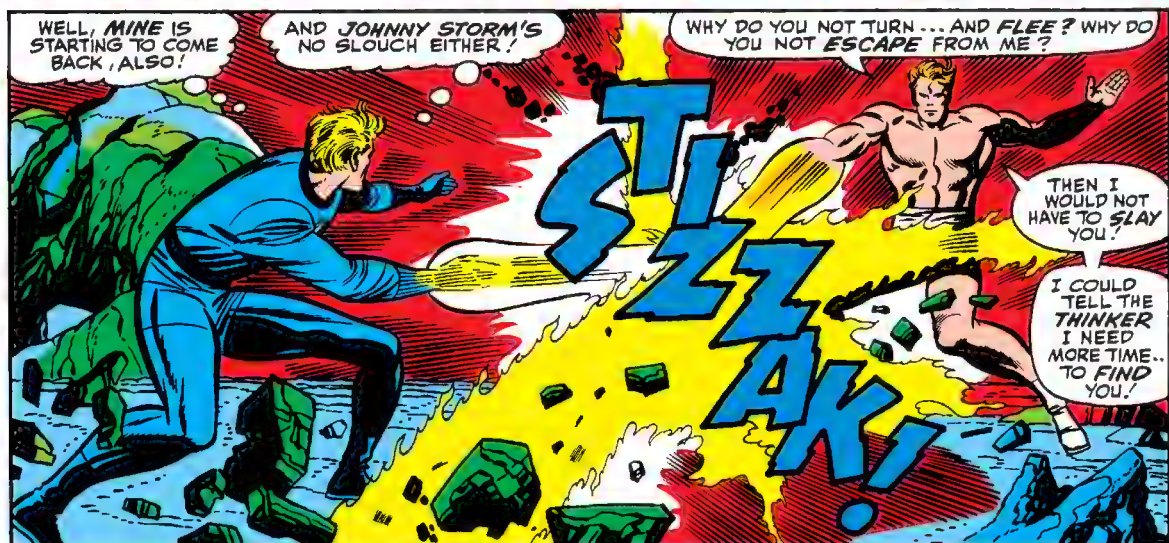
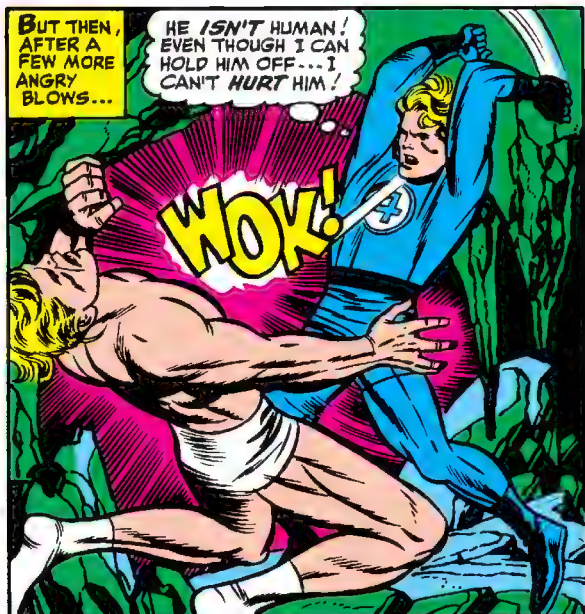
OKAY
THEN...YOU
ASKED
FOR IT!

KRAK!

WHOEVER...OR WHATEVER
YOU MAY BE...

WITHOUT YOUR
FLAME, YOU'RE
JUST ANOTHER
JOE TO ME!

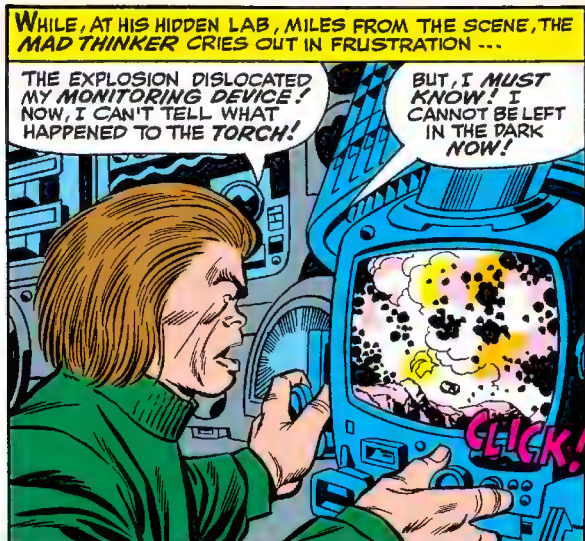
AT LEAST A
PUNCH CAN
SLOW HIM
DOWN!



A SPLIT-SECOND LATER, IGNITED BY THE HIGH-INTENSITY HEAT, THE GAS EXPLODES... SHATTERING THE ENTIRE HILLSIDE...!



WHILE, AT HIS HIDDEN LAB, MILES FROM THE SCENE, THE MAD THINKER CRIES OUT IN FRUSTRATION...



THE EXPLOSION DISLOCATED MY MONITORING DEVICE! NOW, I CAN'T TELL WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TORCH!

BUT, I MUST KNOW! I CANNOT BE LEFT IN THE DARK NOW!

QUASIMODO!! THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT OF MY LIFE'S WORK!

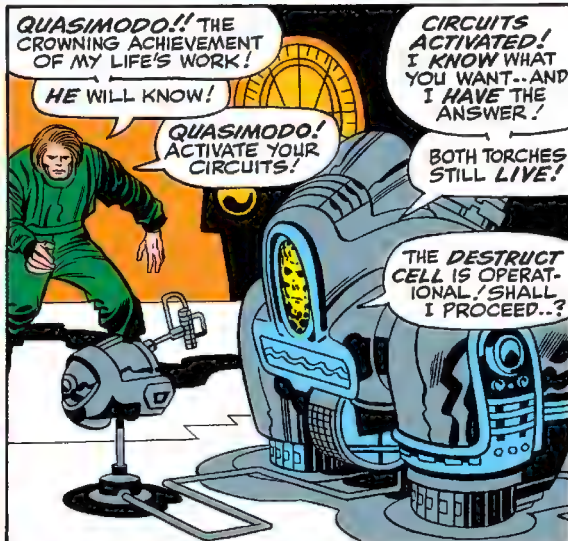
HE WILL KNOW!

QUASIMODO! ACTIVATE YOUR CIRCUITS!

CIRCUITS ACTIVATED! I KNOW WHAT YOU WANT... AND I HAVE THE ANSWER!

BOTH TORCHES STILL LIVE!

THE DESTRUCT CELL IS OPERATIONAL! SHALL I PROCEED...?



NO! NOT YET! WE MUST GIVE THE FLAMING ANDROID A LITTLE MORE TIME BEFORE WE DESTROY HIM!

WHAT OF ME?? I COULD SERVE YOU BETTER THAN HE!

I'VE TOLD YOU A THOUSAND TIMES... I WILL NOT PUT YOU IN HUMAN FORM! I HAVE ALLOWED YOUR ELECTRONS TO SHAPE THEMSELVES IN THE FORM OF A FACE... BUT THAT IS ALL!

YOU ARE MY GREATEST COMPUTER... BUT YOU ARE A MACHINE... AND A MACHINE YOU SHALL REMAIN!



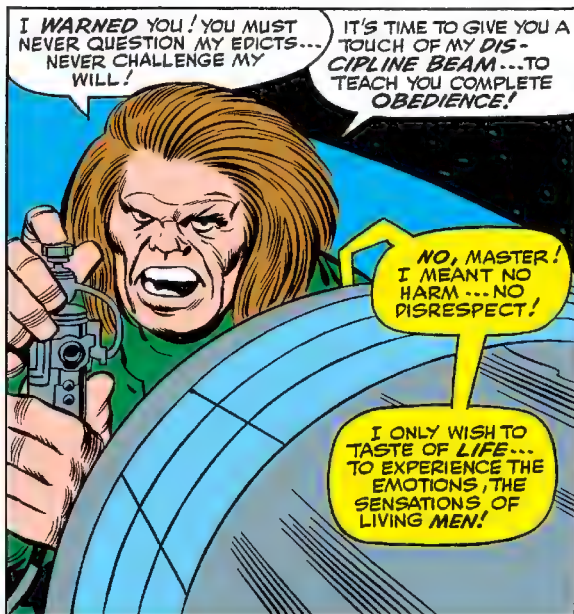
MY GREATEST MISTAKE WAS GIVING YOU A NAME! I SHOULD MERELY HAVE REFERRED TO YOU AS A QUASI-MOTIVATIONAL DESTRUCT ORGAN, INSTEAD OF SHORTENING IT TO QUASIMODO!

YOU MUST STOP THINKING OF YOURSELF AS A PERSON! I COMMAND IT!

BUT, I CAN REASON... I CAN COMPUTE... I CAN FEEL...

WHY MUST I BE IMPRISONED WITHIN THIS METAL SHELL? I WANT TO MOVE... TO BE FREE...!



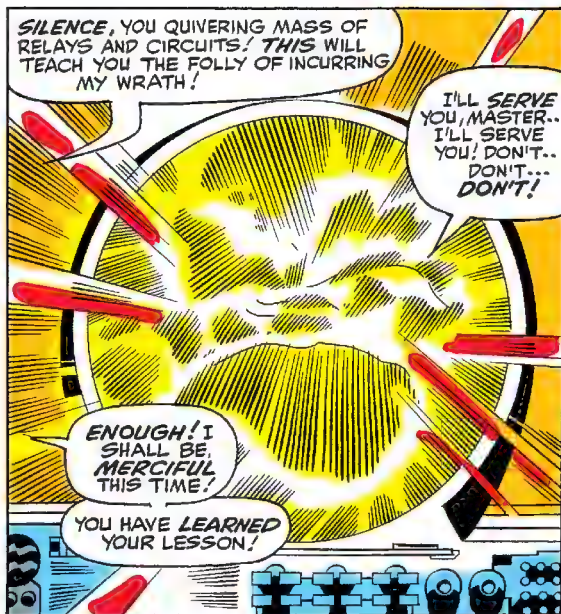


I WARNED YOU! YOU MUST NEVER QUESTION MY EDICTS... NEVER CHALLENGE MY WILL!

IT'S TIME TO GIVE YOU A TOUCH OF MY DISCIPLINE BEAM... TO TEACH YOU COMPLETE OBEDIENCE!

NO, MASTER! I MEANT NO HARM... NO DISRESPECT!

I ONLY WISH TO TASTE OF LIFE... TO EXPERIENCE THE EMOTIONS, THE SENSATIONS OF LIVING MEN!

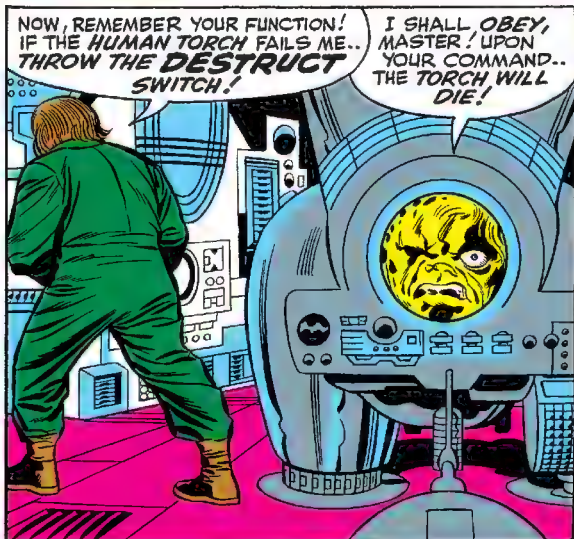


SILENCE, YOU QUIVERING MASS OF RELAYS AND CIRCUITS! THIS WILL TEACH YOU THE FOLLY OF INCURRING MY WRATH!

I'LL SERVE YOU, MASTER... I'LL SERVE YOU! DON'T... DON'T... DON'T!

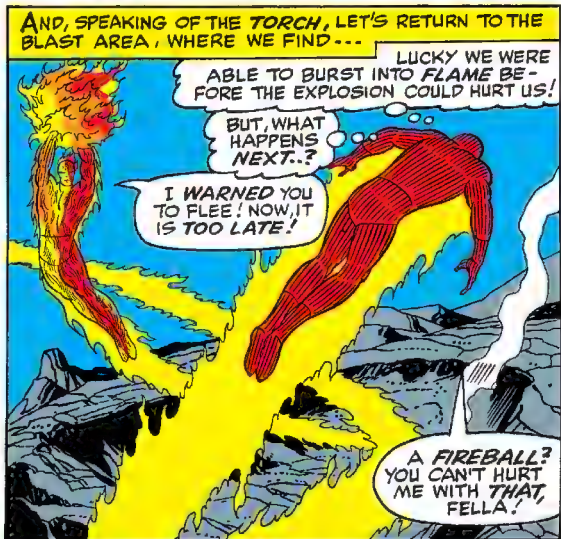
ENOUGH! I SHALL BE MERCIFUL THIS TIME!

YOU HAVE LEARNED YOUR LESSON!



NOW, REMEMBER YOUR FUNCTION! IF THE HUMAN TORCH FAILS ME... THROW THE DESTRUCT SWITCH!

I SHALL OBEY, MASTER! UPON YOUR COMMAND... THE TORCH WILL DIE!



AND, SPEAKING OF THE TORCH, LET'S RETURN TO THE BLAST AREA, WHERE WE FIND...

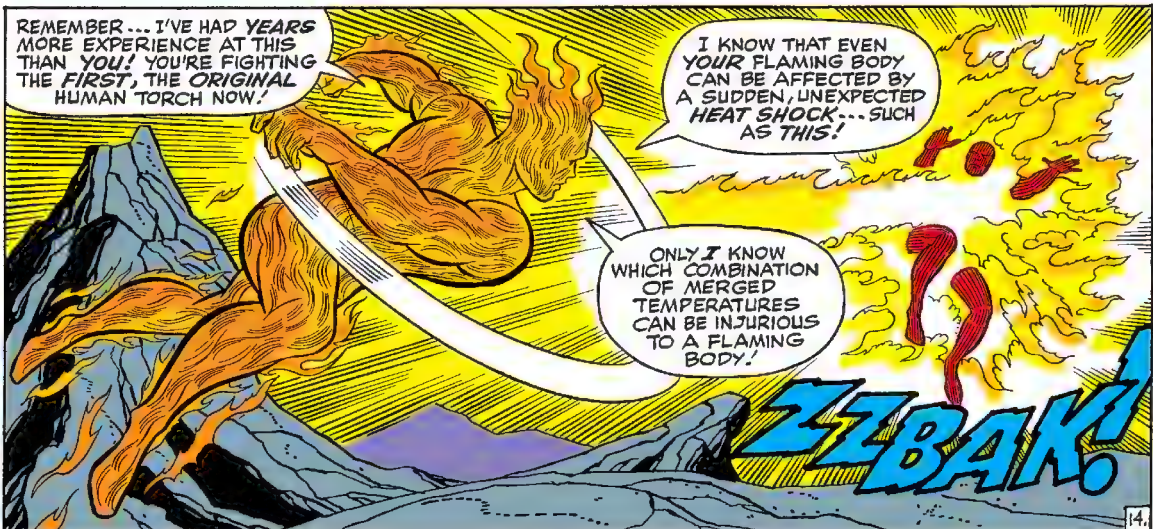
LUCKY WE WERE

ABLE TO BURST INTO FLAME BEFORE THE EXPLOSION COULD HURT US!

BUT, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...?

I WARNED YOU TO FLEE! NOW, IT IS TOO LATE!

A FIREBALL? YOU CAN'T HURT ME WITH THAT, FELLA!

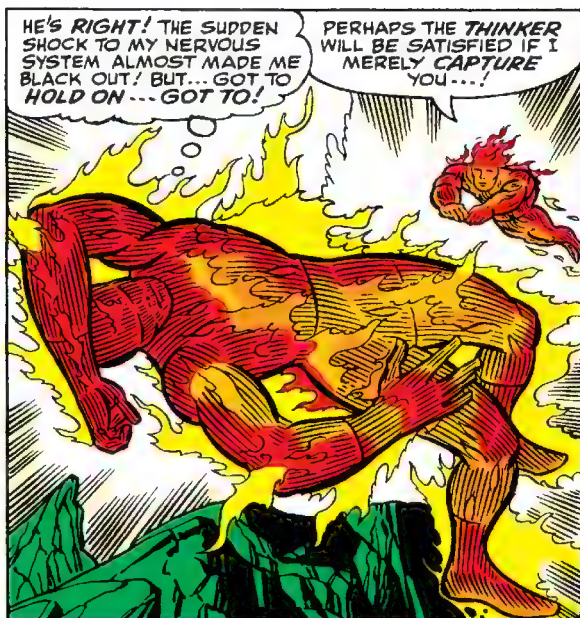


REMEMBER... I'VE HAD YEARS MORE EXPERIENCE AT THIS THAN YOU! YOU'RE FIGHTING THE FIRST, THE ORIGINAL HUMAN TORCH NOW!

I KNOW THAT EVEN YOUR FLAMING BODY CAN BE AFFECTED BY A SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED HEAT SHOCK... SUCH AS THIS!

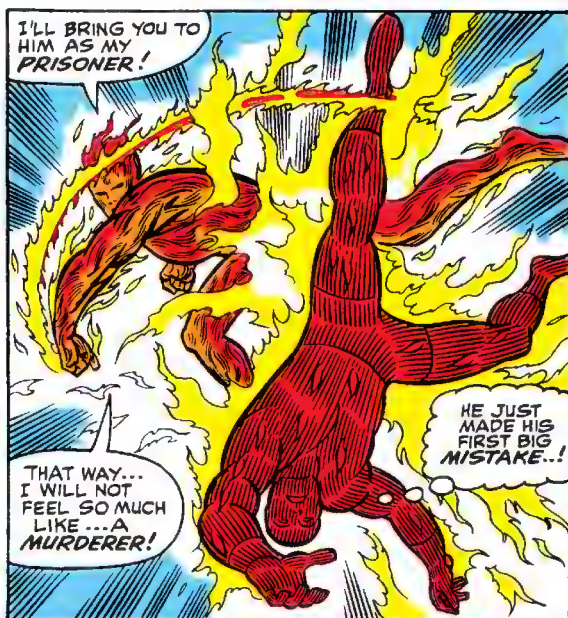
ONLY I KNOW WHICH COMBINATION OF MERGED TEMPERATURES CAN BE INJURIOUS TO A FLAMING BODY!

ZZBAK!



HE'S RIGHT! THE SUDDEN SHOCK TO MY NERVOUS SYSTEM ALMOST MADE ME BLACK OUT! BUT... GOT TO HOLD ON... GOT TO!

PERHAPS THE *THINKER* WILL BE SATISFIED IF I MERELY CAPTURE YOU...!



I'LL BRING YOU TO HIM AS MY PRISONER!

HE JUST MADE HIS FIRST BIG MISTAKE...!

THAT WAY... I WILL NOT FEEL SO MUCH LIKE... A MURDERER!

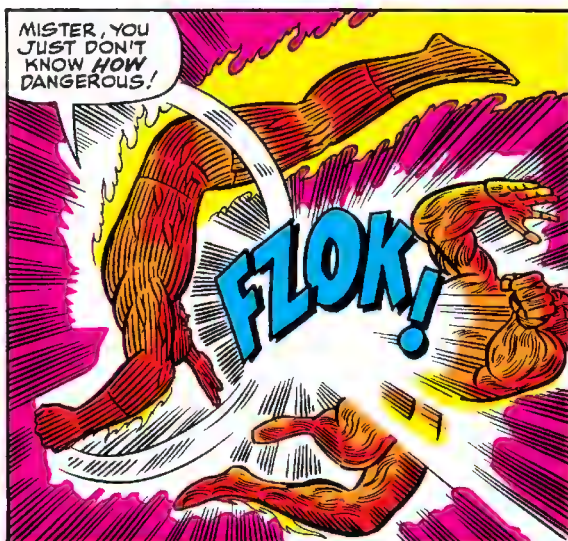


YOU DIDN'T REALIZE THAT A BLOW FROM A *FLAMING FIST* WOULD MERELY REVITALIZE ME... RETURN ME TO MY NORMAL STRENGTH!

OR DID HE REALIZE?

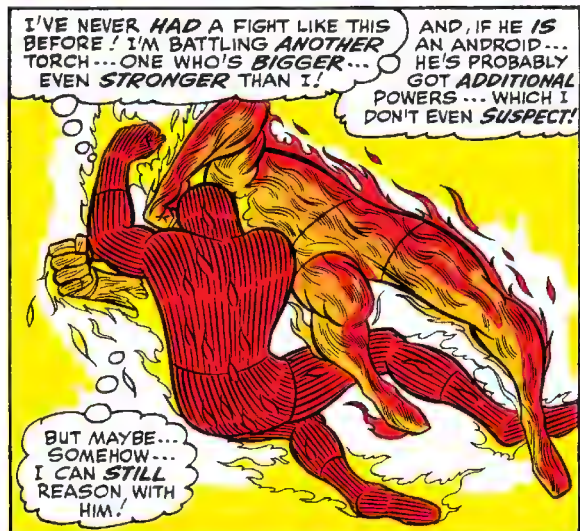
WHAT KIND OF ENEMY IS HE, ANYWAY?

YOU ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN I THOUGHT, JOHNNY STORM!



MISTER, YOU JUST DON'T KNOW *HOW* DANGEROUS!

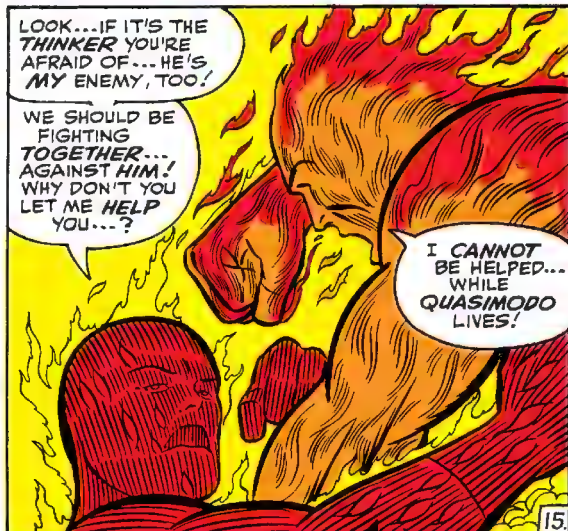
FZOK!



I'VE NEVER HAD A FIGHT LIKE THIS BEFORE! I'M BATTLING ANOTHER TORCH... ONE WHO'S *BIGGER*... EVEN *STRONGER* THAN I!

AND, IF HE IS AN ANDROID... HE'S PROBABLY GOT *ADDITIONAL* POWERS... WHICH I DON'T EVEN *SUSPECT*!

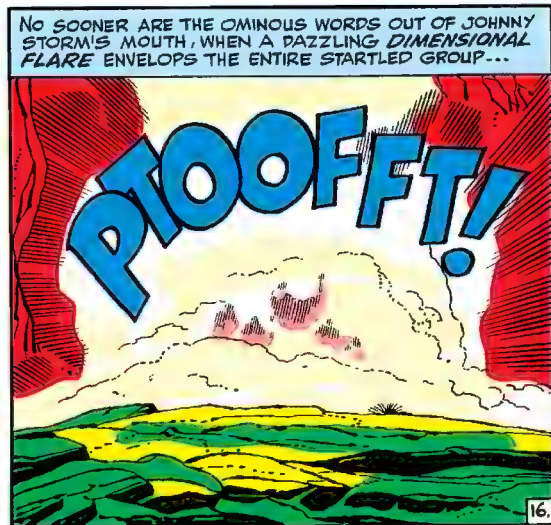
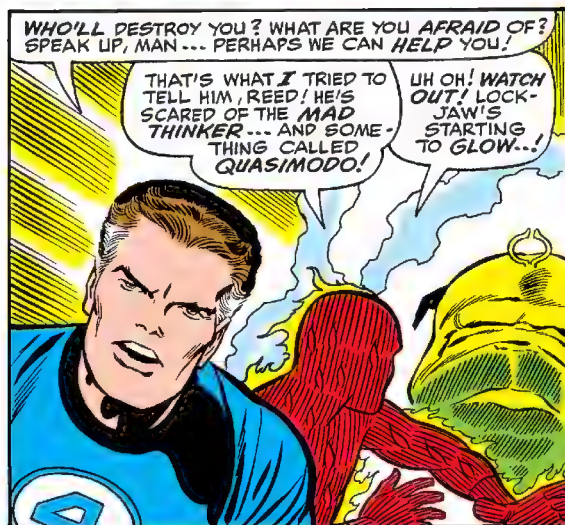
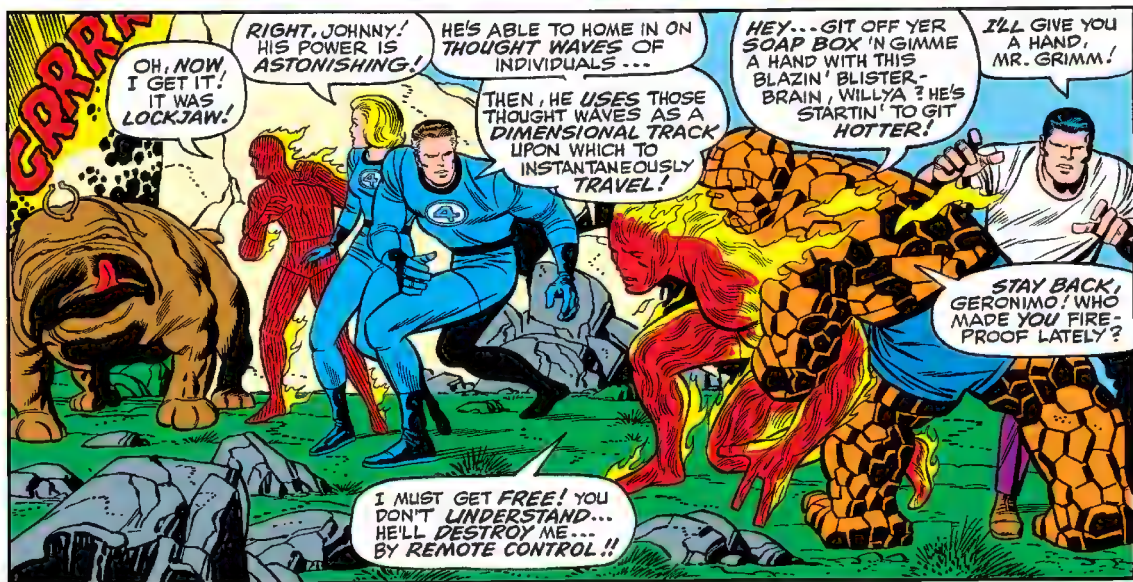
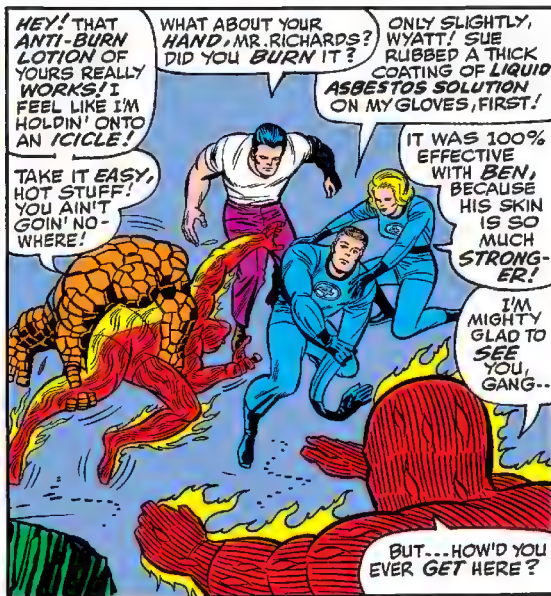
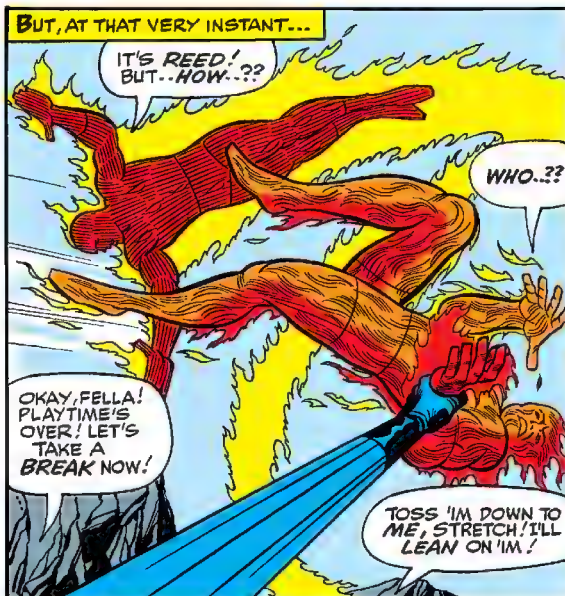
BUT MAYBE... SOMEHOW... I CAN *STILL* REASON WITH HIM!

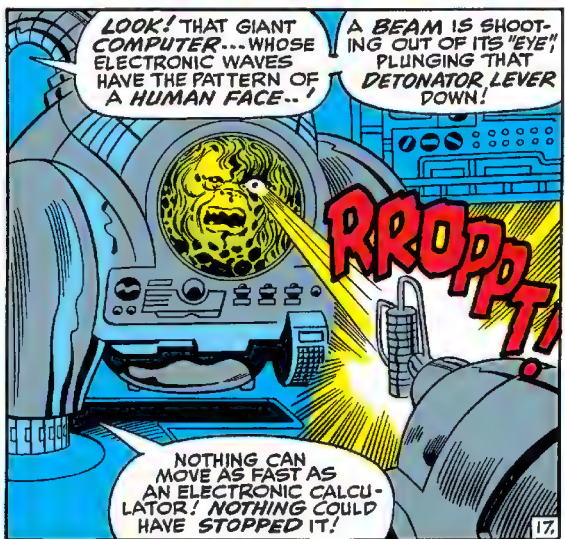
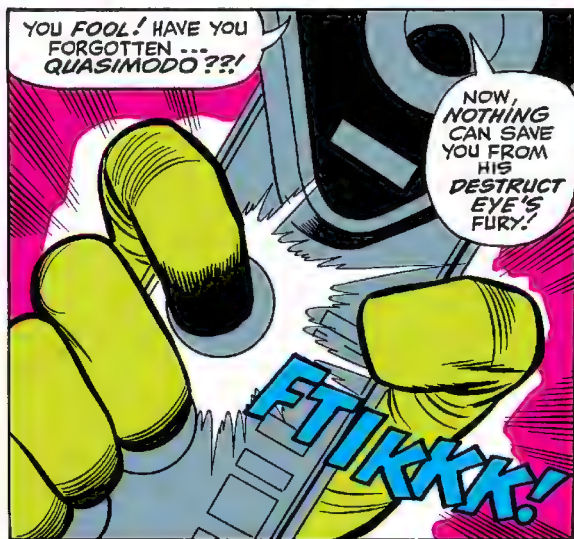
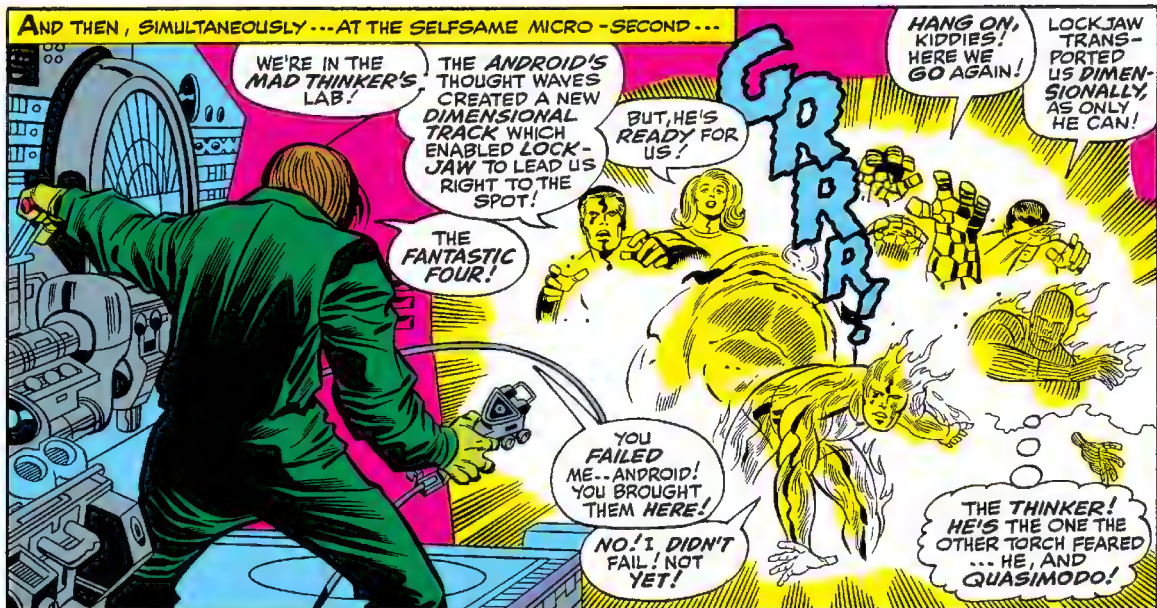


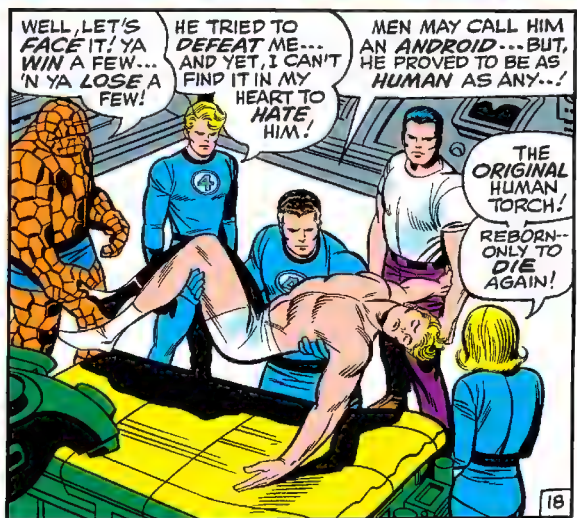
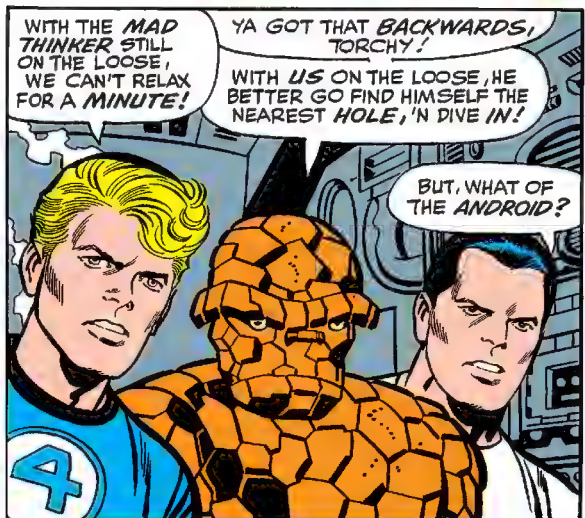
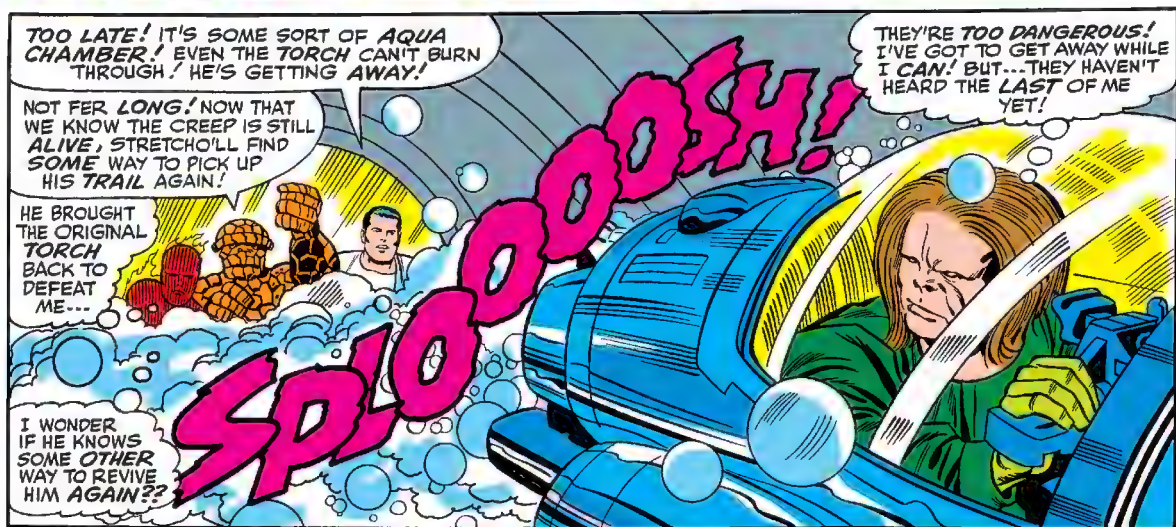
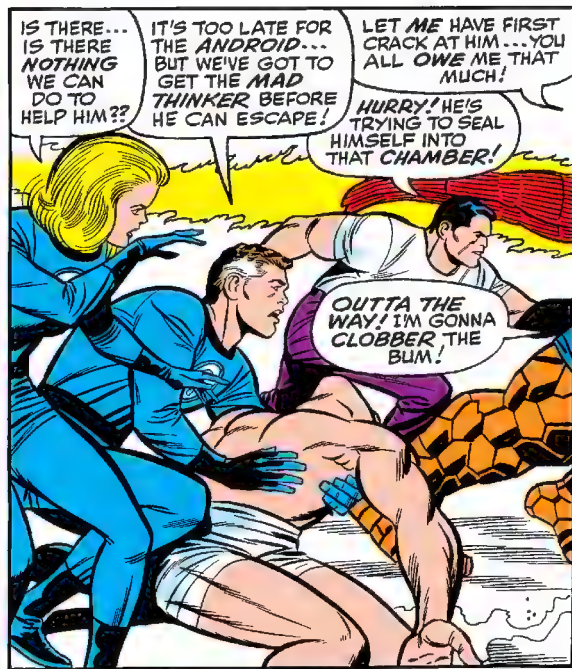
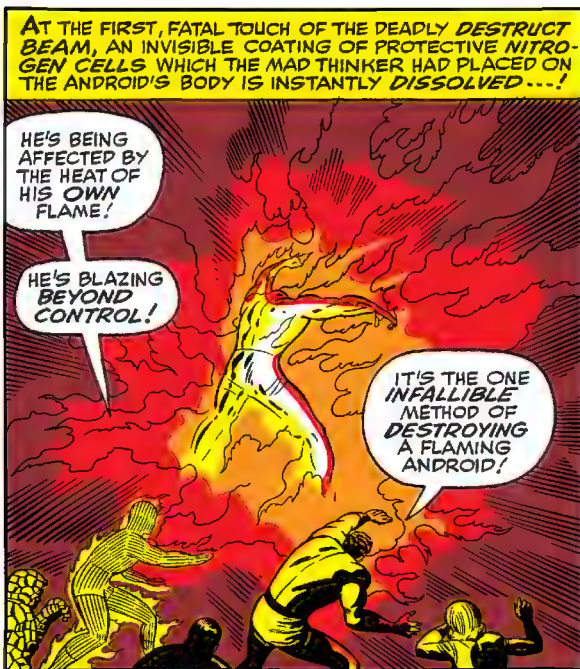
LOOK... IF IT'S THE *THINKER* YOU'RE AFRAID OF... HE'S MY ENEMY, TOO!

WE SHOULD BE FIGHTING *TOGETHER*... AGAINST HIM! WHY DON'T YOU LET ME HELP YOU...?

I CANNOT BE HELPED... WHILE *QUASIMODO* LIVES!









LOOK! LOCKJAW... HE'S STARTING TO GLOW AGAIN!

HE'S GETTING READY TO MAKE ANOTHER **DIMENSIONAL HOP!** HE'LL BE GONE WITHIN SECONDS!

BUT... I'VE GOT TO GO WITH HIM! HE'S STILL MY BEST CHANCE OF REACHING CRYSTAL... BEHIND THE INHUMANS' BARRIER!



SUE... REED... TELL ME YOU BOTH **UNDERSTAND!** I DON'T WANT TO **DESERT** THE FF... BUT I'VE GOT TO FIND HER! I'VE GOT TO FIND CRYSTAL!

OF COURSE, JOHNNY... AND I HOPE YOU'LL HAVE BETTER LUCK THIS TIME, SON!

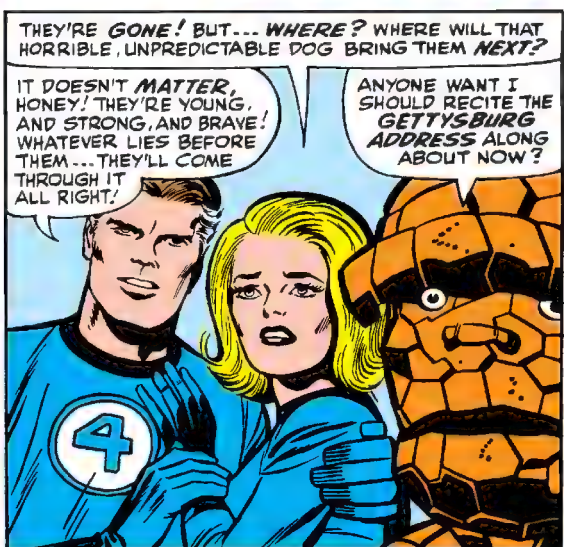
BE CAREFUL, JOHNNY DEAR! PROMISE YOU'LL BE CAREFUL!

SHEESH! WHENEVER WE AIN'T FIGHTIN' SOMEONE, WE'RE SWAPPIN' GOOD-BYES!



WAIT, JOHNNY! I WAS IN ON THE **BEGINNING** OF THIS WITH YOU... NOW I'VE GOT TO SEE IT THROUGH... TILL THE **END!**

THEN CLIMB ABOARD, PAL! THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR ONE MORE! HERE WE GOOOOOOO...



THEY'RE GONE! BUT... WHERE? WHERE WILL THAT HORRIBLE, UNPREDICTABLE DOG BRING THEM NEXT?

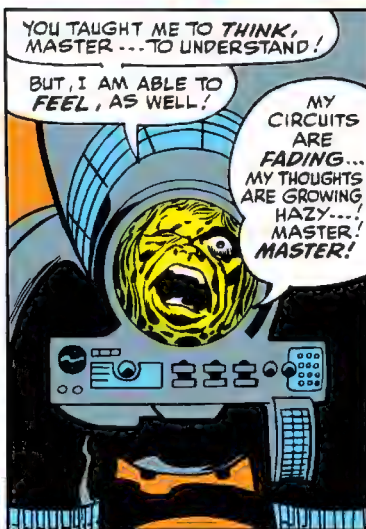
IT DOESN'T **MATTER**, HONEY! THEY'RE YOUNG AND STRONG, AND BRAVE! WHATEVER LIES BEFORE THEM... THEY'LL COME THROUGH IT ALL RIGHT!

ANYONE WANT I SHOULD RECITE THE **GETTYSBURG ADDRESS** ALONG ABOUT NOW?



WHILE, IN THE NEXT ROOM, ALONE AND UNTENDED, A STRANGE, UNCANNY COMPLEX OF ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS SPEAKS IN A VOICE THAT IS NOT QUITE A VOICE...

MASTER... COME BACK! DON'T LEAVE ME ALONE LIKE THIS! I'VE SERVED YOU WELL...!



YOU TAUGHT ME TO **THINK**, MASTER... TO **UNDERSTAND!**

BUT, I AM ABLE TO **FEEL**, AS WELL!

MY CIRCUITS ARE **FADING**... MY THOUGHTS ARE GROWING **HAZY**...! MASTER! MASTER!



I WANT TO BE **HUMAN**... JUST **ONCE**... BEFORE... I DIE...

I COULD SUCCEED WHERE THE ANDROID FAILED! I COULD DESTROY THE **FANTASTIC FOUR!**

BUT, NO HUMAN EARS HEAR THE SLOWLY FADING VOICE... THE VOICE WHICH GROWS FAINTER... AND FAINTER... UNTIL ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE SENSELESS CRACKLING OF A DYING ENERGY CIRCUIT...! UNTIL... THERE IS... SILENCE!

The End

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE



IND.



MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

12¢

57
DEC

Fantastic FOUR

**"ENTER...
DOCTOR
DOOM!"**



**UNDENIABLY,
THE WORLD'S
GREATEST
ARCH-VILLAIN!**

**AND DON'T DARE
MISS OUR
SWINGIN'
SUPER-DUPER
GUEST STARS!**

THE FABULOUS F.F. THOUGHT THEY HAD TROUBLE ENOUGH, BUT THEN...

"ENTER... DR. DOOM!"

Also FEATURING: THE SINISTER
SPECTER OF THE SENSATIONAL
SANDMAN!

BEN! SUE! LOOK
SHARP! THE GUARDS
ARE UNCONSCIOUS! WHEN
WE ANSWERED THE CALL
TO COME TO STATE PRISON,
WE FELL INTO A TRAP!

THEY SAID WE
SHOULD COME
HERE 'CUZ THE
SANDMAN 'N
THE WIZARD
WERE READY TO
SIGN IF WE'D
HELP GIVE THEM
A PAROLE!

BLAST IT!
EVEN MY AUNT
PETUNIA
WOULDN'T'A
BELIEVED A
NUTTY STORY
LIKE THAT--
BUT WE HAD'TA
FALL FER IT!

WHOEVER
WHUMPED THESE
GUYS IS AN EXPERT
WHUMPER FROM
'WAY BACK!

STATE PRISON
VISITORS
ROOM

REED!
BEN!
LOOK
OUT--!!!

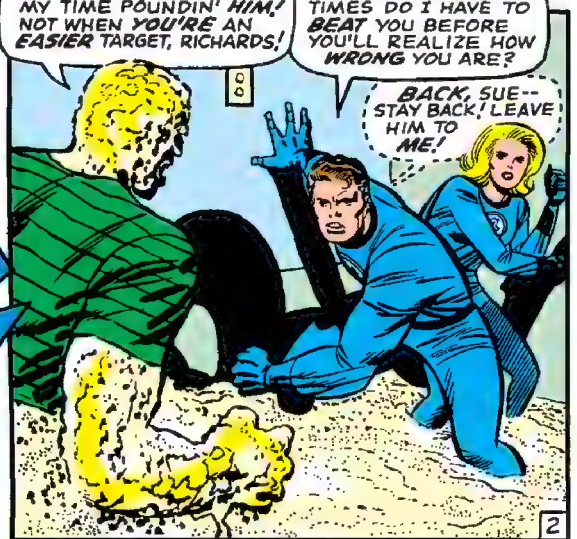
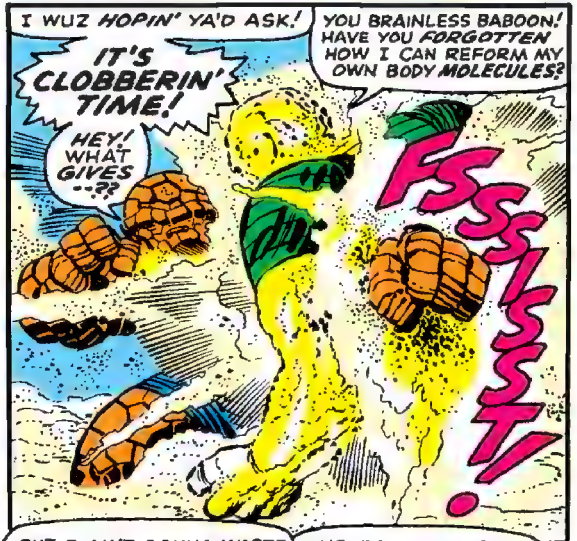
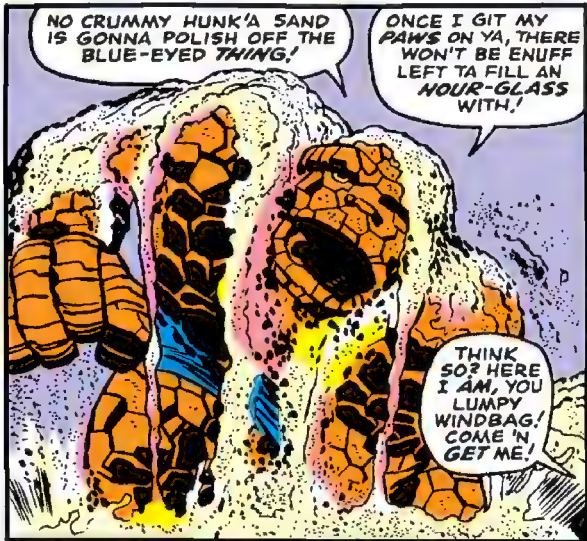
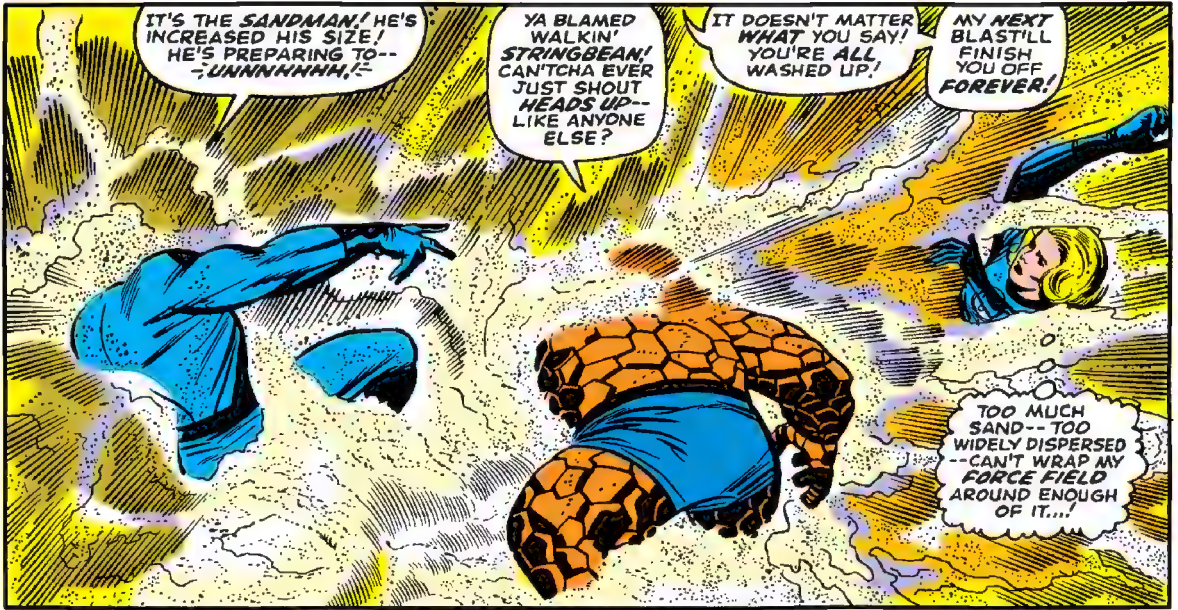
CO-STARRING:
THE
WIZARD!
THE
INHUMANS!
THE
SILVER
SURFER!

ADDITIONAL PROOF, IF
ANY STILL BE NEEDED, THAT
THIS IS, NOW AND FOREVER,
THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS!

PANORAMICALLY
PRODUCED BY:
STAN • JACK
LEE • KIRBY

INKING:
JOE SINNOTT

LETTERING:
ARTIE SIMEK



REACHING OUT SUDDENLY, MR. FANTASTIC PRESSES A NEARBY AIR DUCT CONTROL PANEL, AND--A SPLIT-SECOND LATER--

THAT'LL KEEP HIM BUSY FOR A FEW MINUTES!

SHWURP!

BUT, REED-- THAT DUCT LEADS OUTSIDE! HE'LL ESCAPE FROM THE PRISON!

I'VE ALREADY THOUGHT OF THAT, HONEY!

JUST TRAP THE SAND WITH YOUR FORCE FIELD BEFORE IT'S ALL PASSED THRU!

HE CAN NEVER ACTUALLY SEPARATE HIS BODY! HE CAN'T ESCAPE SO LONG AS ANY OF HIS SANDY MOLECULES ARE TRAPPED BEHIND HIM!

SUE! HURRY! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

YOU OUT-SMARTED YOURSELF THAT TIME, RICHARDS! I WANTED THE SANDMAN TO GET AWAY!

HE'S AWAY, AWRIGHT! SOME BIG FAT HEROES WE ARE!

THE WIZARD!
YOU WERE IN THIS WITH HIM, TOO!

HE AND THE SANDMAN MUST'VE BEEN PLANNING THIS FOR MONTHS! THEY TOOK US ALL BY SURPRISE!

BUT, AT LEAST THE WIZARD DIDN'T GET AWAY! AND HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE THE BRAINS OF THE TEAM!

YOU FOOLS! HOW LONG DO YOU THINK YOU CAN HOLD ME, WHILE THE SANDMAN IS FREE OUTSIDE?

THIS WAS HOW I PLANNED IT! WITH MY POWERFUL PARTNER AT LARGE, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE RETURNS FOR ME!

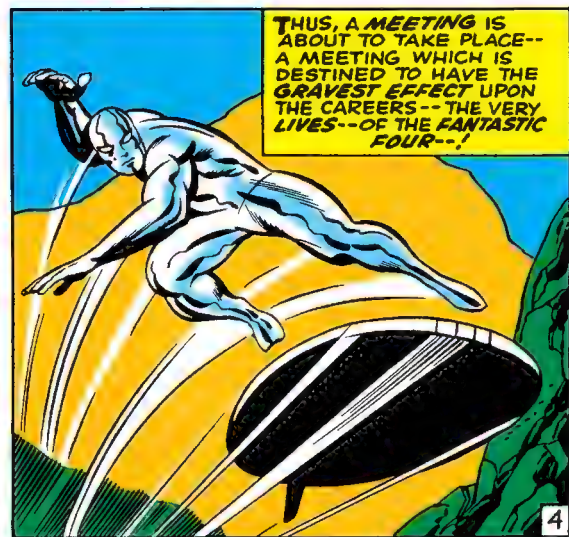
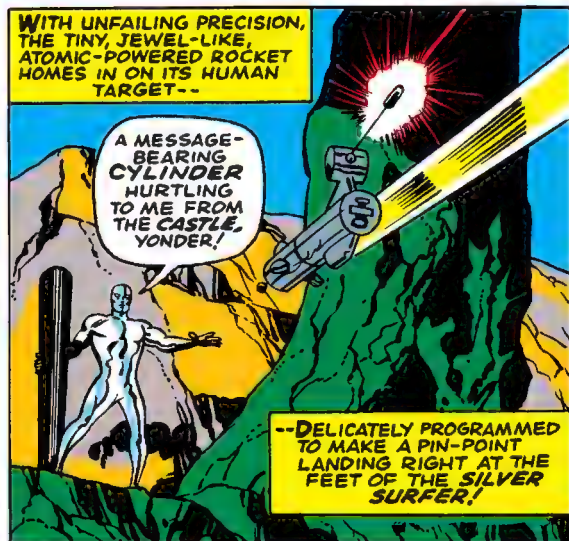
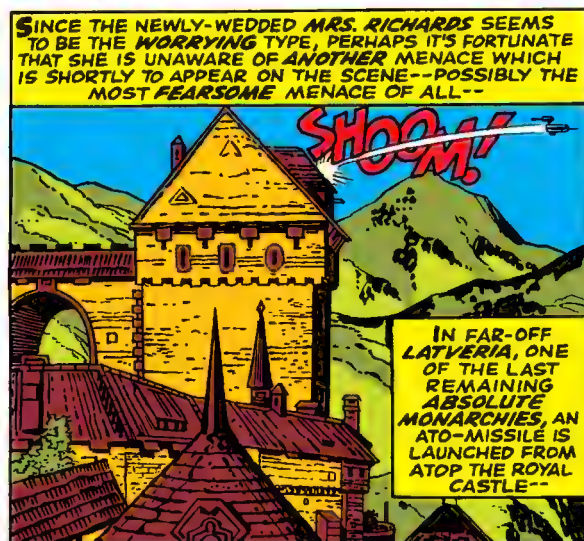
EASY, SUE DEAR! THE GUARDS HAVE HIM SAFELY IN TOW, NOW!

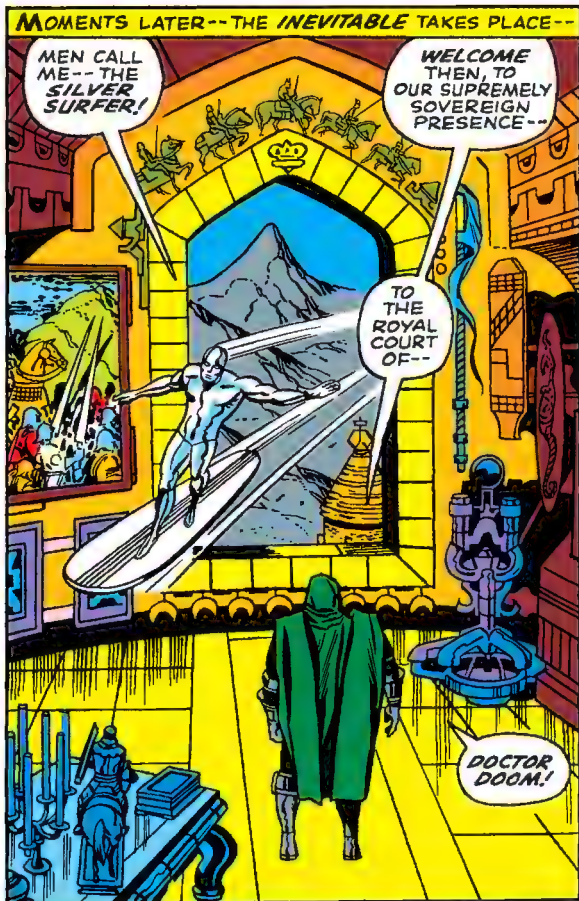
HEY! EASY WITH THAT ARM OF YOURS! A THING LIKE THAT COULD HURT A GUY!

HOLD ONTO 'IM, BOYS! THAT BOZO'S ALMOST AS SLIPPERY AS SANDMAN HIMSELF!

OH-- SORRY, FELLA! DIDN'T REALIZE YOU WERE JUST TRYIN' TO STOP THE MISSUS FROM FALLIN'!

LUCKY HE DOESN'T HAVE HIS ANTI-GRAV DEVICES ON 'IM-- I HOPE!

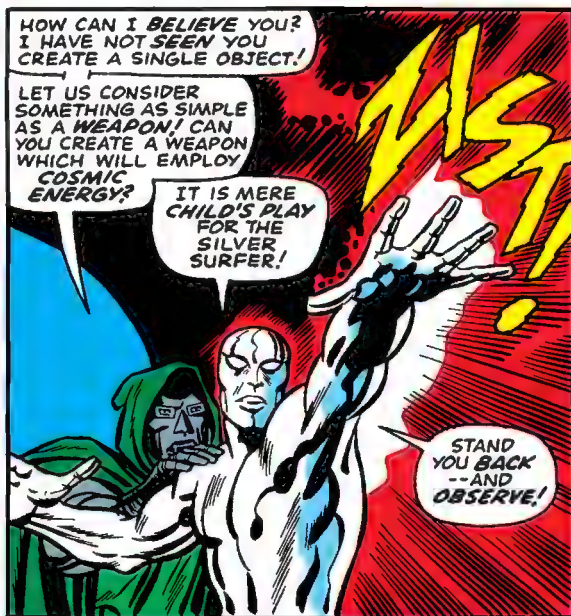






COSMIC ENERGY!
BUT--THERE IS
NOTHING TO
EQUAL IT--NOT
ANYWHERE ON
EARTH!

IT HAS
NO EQUAL
IN THE GALAXY
ITSELF! FOR
IT CAN BOTH
DESTROY--
AND CREATE!

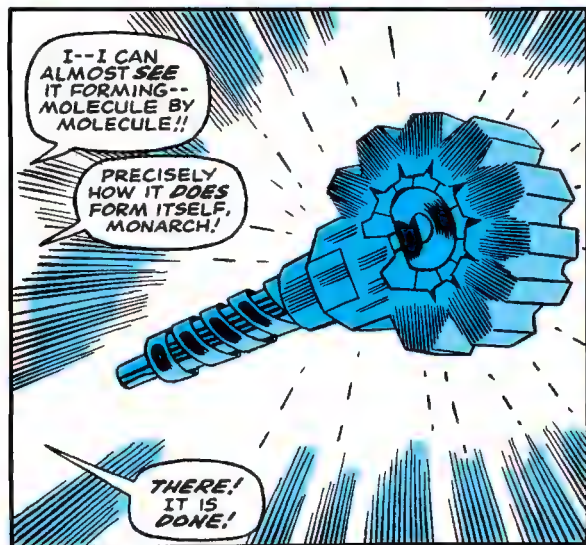


HOW CAN I BELIEVE YOU?
I HAVE NOT SEEN YOU
CREATE A SINGLE OBJECT!

LET US CONSIDER
SOMETHING AS SIMPLE
AS A WEAPON! CAN
YOU CREATE A WEAPON
WHICH WILL EMPLOY
COSMIC ENERGY?

IT IS MERE
CHILD'S PLAY
FOR THE SILVER
SURFER!

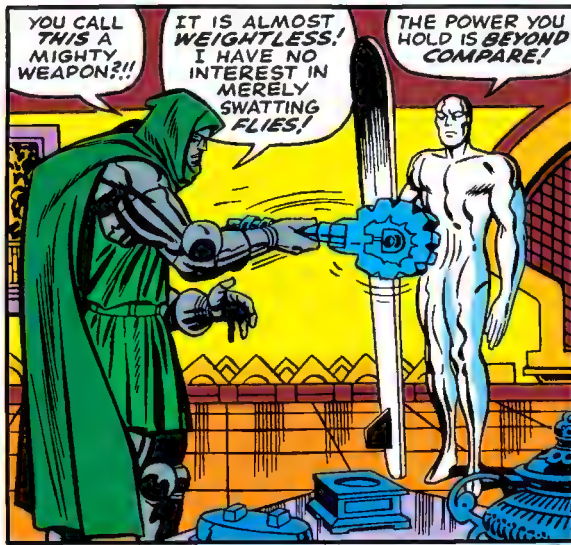
STAND
YOU BACK
--AND
OBSERVE!



I--I CAN
ALMOST SEE
IT FORMING--
MOLECULE BY
MOLECULE!!

PRECISELY
HOW IT DOES
FORM ITSELF,
MONARCH!

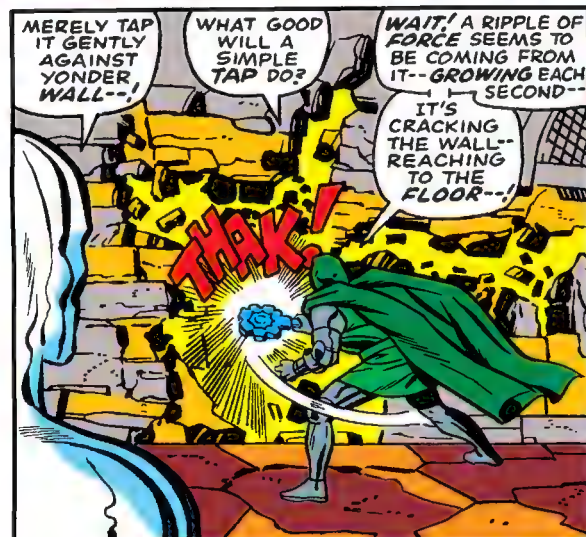
THERE!
IT IS
DONE!



YOU CALL
THIS A
MIGHTY
WEAPON?!!

IT IS ALMOST
WEIGHTLESS!
I HAVE NO
INTEREST IN
MERELY
SWATTING
FLIES!

THE POWER YOU
HOLD IS BEYOND
COMPARE!



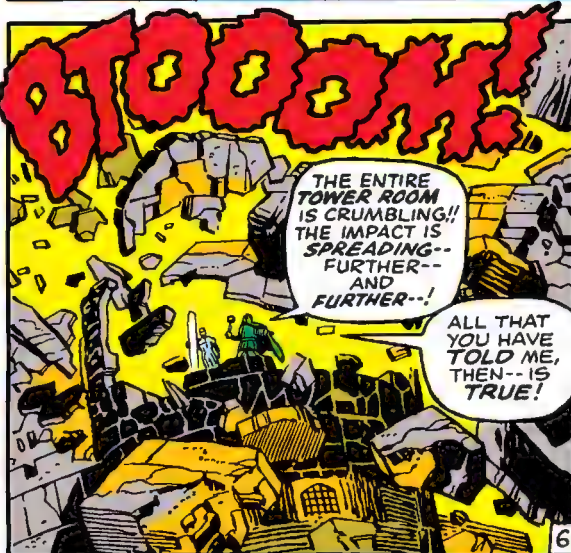
MERELY TAP
IT GENTLY
AGAINST
YONDER
WALL--

WHAT GOOD
WILL A
SIMPLE
TAP DO?

WAIT! A RIPPLE OF
FORCE SEEMS TO
BE COMING FROM
IT-- GROWING EACH
-- SECOND--

IT'S
CRACKING--
THE WALL--
REACHING TO
THE FLOOR--

THAK!



STOOONK!

THE ENTIRE
TOWER ROOM
IS CRUMBLING!!
THE IMPACT IS
SPREADING--
FURTHER--
AND
FURTHER--

ALL THAT
YOU HAVE
TOLD ME,
THEN-- IS
TRUE!



WITH A WEAPON SUCH AS THIS, I COULD CONTROL A WORLD!

EVEN THE ACCURSED THING WOULD BE HELPLESS BEFORE ME!



YOU-YOU MADE SOME SORT OF SUDDEN GESTURE --AND THEN --THE WEAPON VANISHED!!

IN THE HANDS OF EARTHINGS, SUCH A DEVICE MIGHT EVENTUALLY DESTROY THE UNIVERSE!

I HAVE STUDIED THIS PLANET FOR MANY LONG MONTHS, AND HAVE REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT MANKIND IS TRULY MAD!

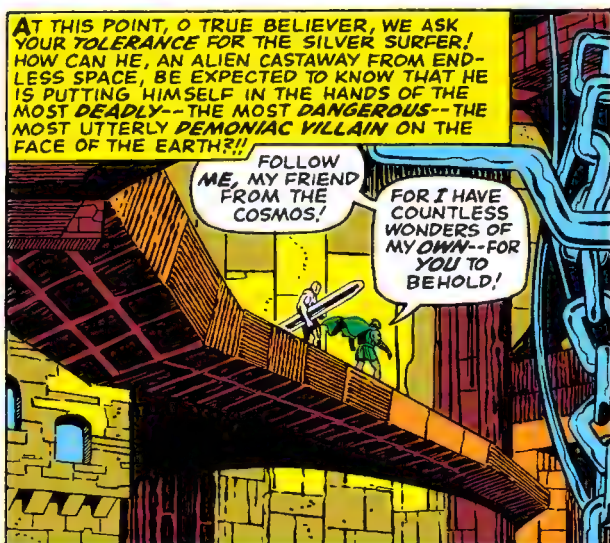


BUT NOW, I MUST RESTORE YOUR CHAMBER!

THEREFORE, STAND YOU BACK, ONCE MORE, WHILE I PERFORM THE TASK!

THERE IS NO NEED FOR THAT! MY SERFS SHALL SET IT TO RIGHTS!

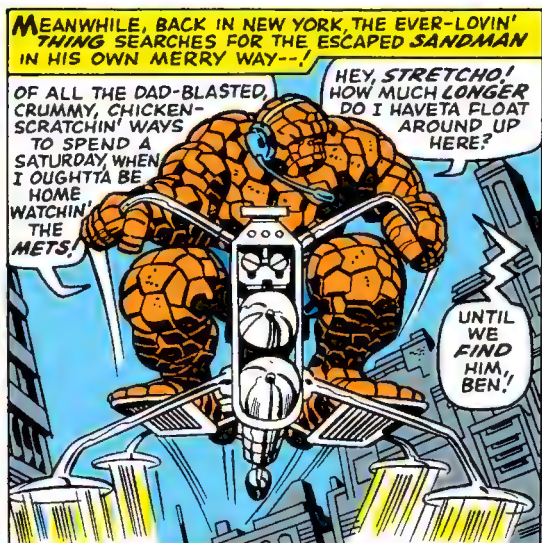
COME--WE HAVE MANY MATTERS OF GREAT MAGNITUDE TO BE DISCUSSED!



AT THIS POINT, O TRUE BELIEVER, WE ASK YOUR TOLERANCE FOR THE SILVER SURFER! HOW CAN HE, AN ALIEN CASTAWAY FROM ENDLESS SPACE, BE EXPECTED TO KNOW THAT HE IS PUTTING HIMSELF IN THE HANDS OF THE MOST DEADLY--THE MOST DANGEROUS--THE MOST UTTERLY DEMONIC VILLAIN ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH?!!

FOLLOW ME, MY FRIEND FROM THE COSMOS!

FOR I HAVE COUNTLESS WONDERS OF MY OWN--FOR YOU TO BEHOLD!

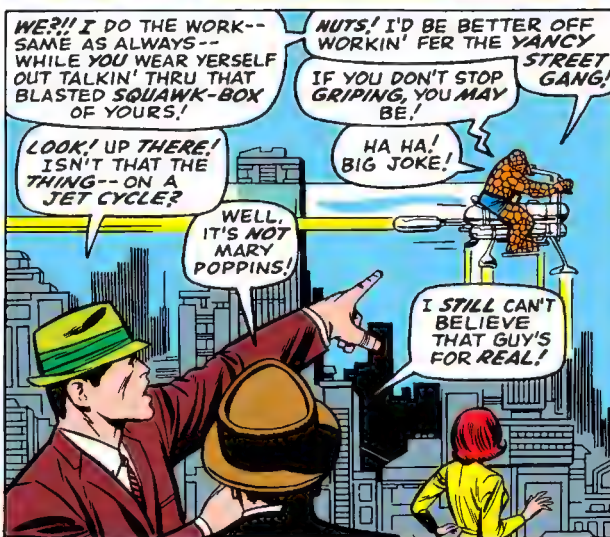


MEANWHILE, BACK IN NEW YORK, THE EVER-LOVIN' THING SEARCHES FOR THE ESCAPED SANDMAN IN HIS OWN MERRY WAY--!

OF ALL THE DAD-BLASTED, CRUMMY, CHICKEN-SCRATCHIN' WAYS TO SPEND A SATURDAY WHEN I OUGHTTA BE HOME WATCHIN' THE METS!

HEY, STRETCHO! HOW MUCH LONGER DO I HAVETA FLOAT AROUND UP HERE?

UNTIL WE FIND HIM, BEN!



WE?!! I DO THE WORK--SAME AS ALWAYS--WHILE YOU WEAR YERSELF OUT TALKIN' THRU THAT BLASTED SQUAWK-BOX OF YOURS!

NUTS! I'D BE BETTER OFF WORKIN' FER THE YANCY STREET GANG!

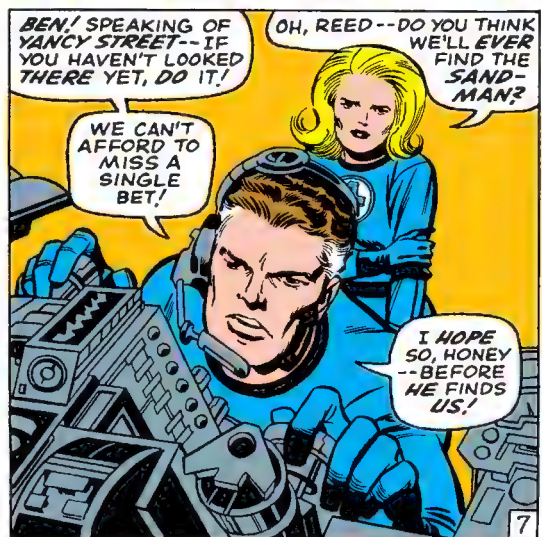
IF YOU DON'T STOP GRIPING, YOU MAY BE!

LOOK! UP THERE! ISN'T THAT THE THING--ON A JET CYCLE?

WELL, IT'S NOT MARY POPPINS!

HA HA! BIG JOKE!

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THAT GUY'S FOR REAL!

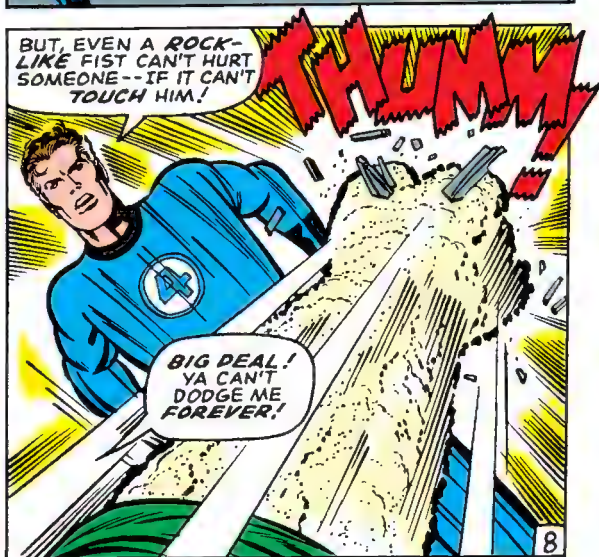
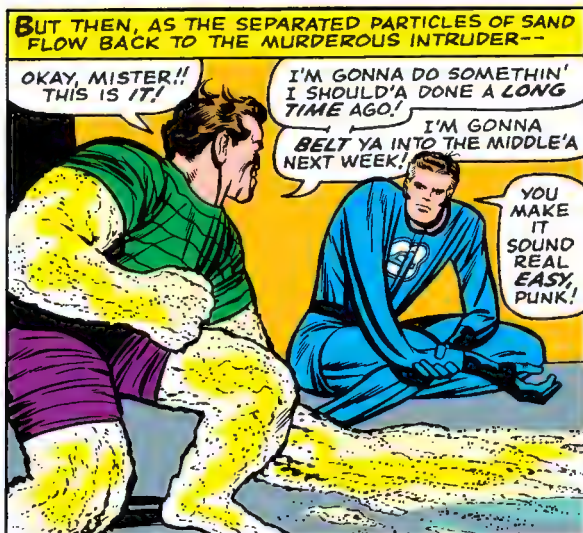
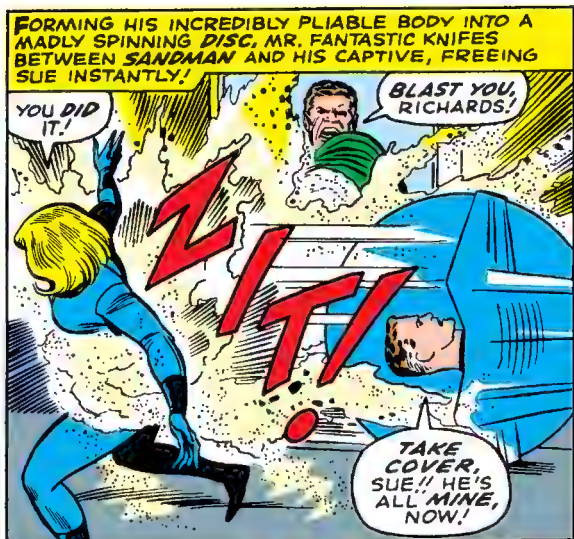
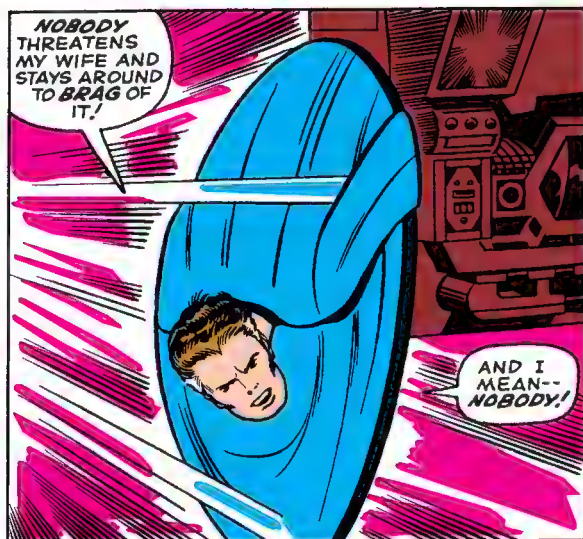
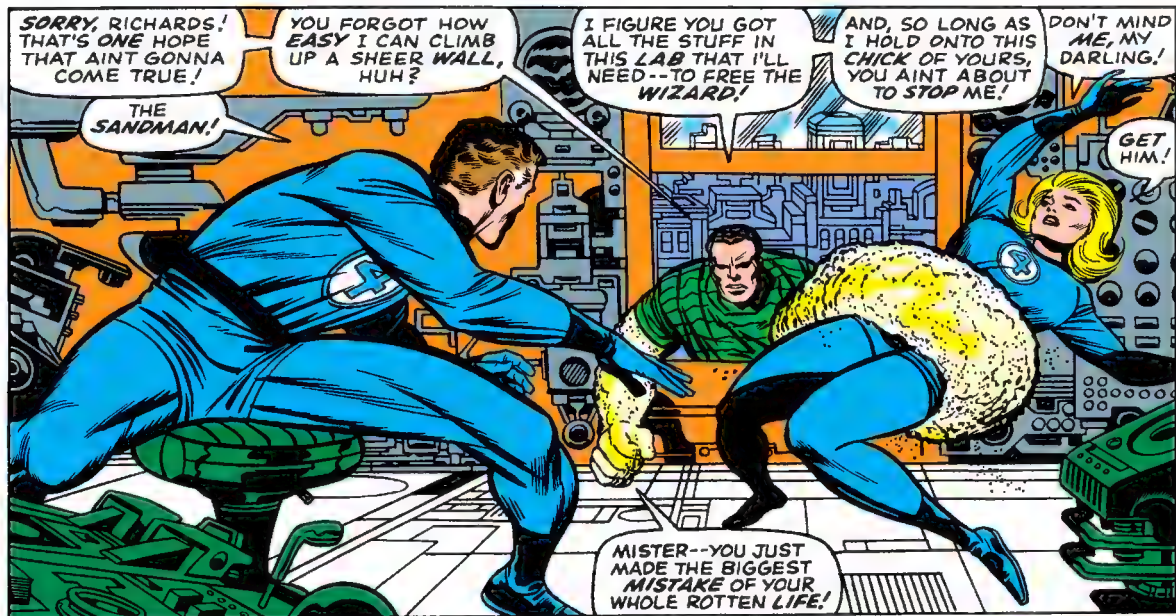


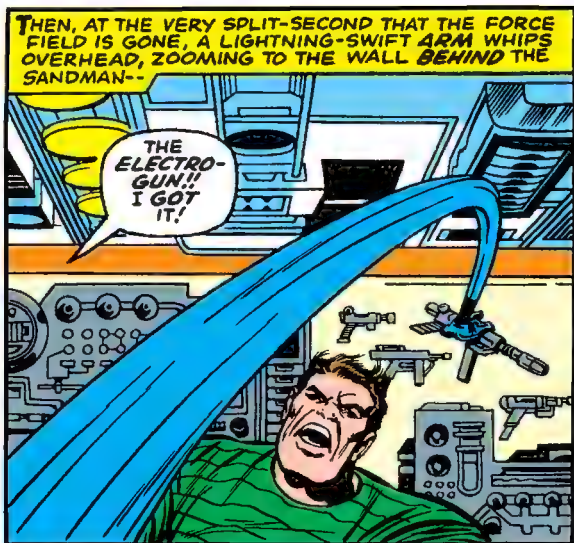
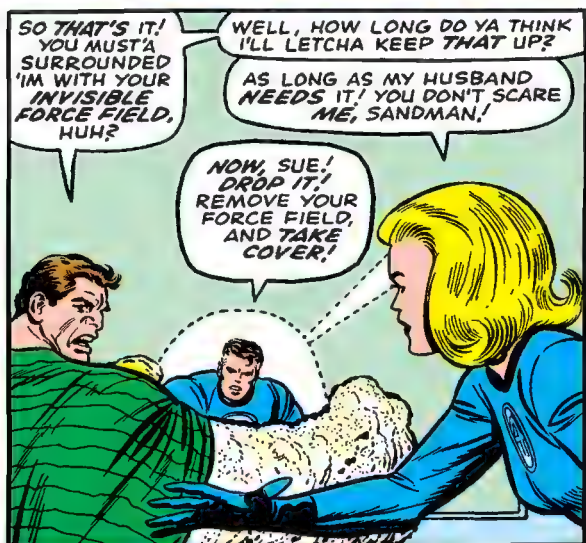
BEN! SPEAKING OF YANCY STREET--IF YOU HAVEN'T LOOKED THERE YET, DO IT!

OH, REED--DO YOU THINK WE'LL EVER FIND THE SAND-MAN?

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS A SINGLE BET!

I HOPE SO, HONEY--BEFORE HE FINDS US!







I WAS A **FOOL** TO CHALLENGE RICHARDS! HE'S TOO SMART-- HE THINKS TOO FAST!

I'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE--AND FAST!

OKAY, YOU WIN **THIS** ROUND-- BUT I STILL GOT AN ACE UP MY SLEEVE!

IF I SHOOT A WHOLE MESS OF SAND RIGHT INTO YOUR GUN'S RAYS, IT'LL BECOME **ELECTRICALLY-CHARGED--** LIKE THIS!

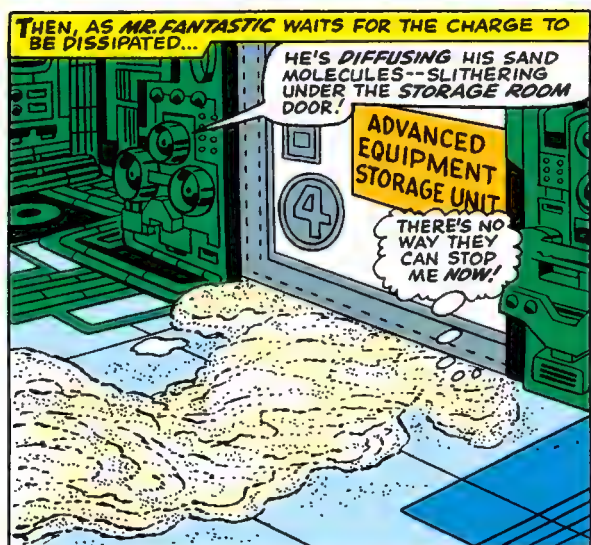
SSIZZT!



I WAS **WRONG** ABOUT HIM! I DIDN'T THINK THE SANDMAN HAD **BRAINS** ENOUGH TO FIGURE THAT OUT!

IF I'D STOOD MY GROUND FOR ANOTHER SECOND, THAT **ELECTRICALLY-CHARGED SAND** WOULD HAVE GIVEN ME A FATAL **JOLT!**

SPASH!

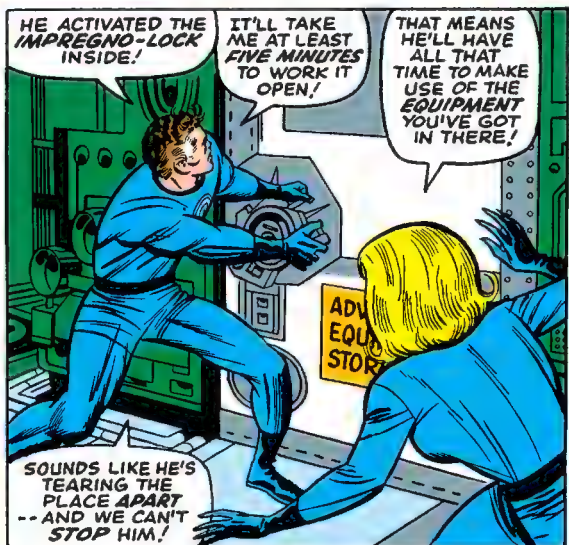


THEN, AS MR. FANTASTIC WAITS FOR THE CHARGE TO BE DISSIPATED...

HE'S **DIFFUSING** HIS SAND MOLECULES--SLITHERING UNDER THE **STORAGE ROOM** DOOR!

ADVANCED EQUIPMENT STORAGE UNIT

THERE'S NO WAY THEY CAN STOP ME NOW!

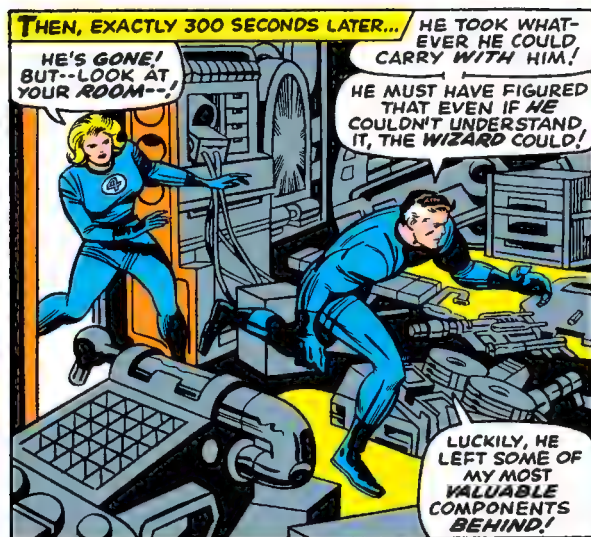


HE ACTIVATED THE **IMPREGNO-LOCK** INSIDE!

IT'LL TAKE ME AT LEAST **FIVE MINUTES** TO WORK IT OPEN!

THAT MEANS HE'LL HAVE ALL THAT TIME TO MAKE USE OF THE **EQUIPMENT** YOU'VE GOT IN THERE!

SOUNDS LIKE HE'S TEARING THE PLACE **APART**-- AND WE CAN'T STOP HIM!



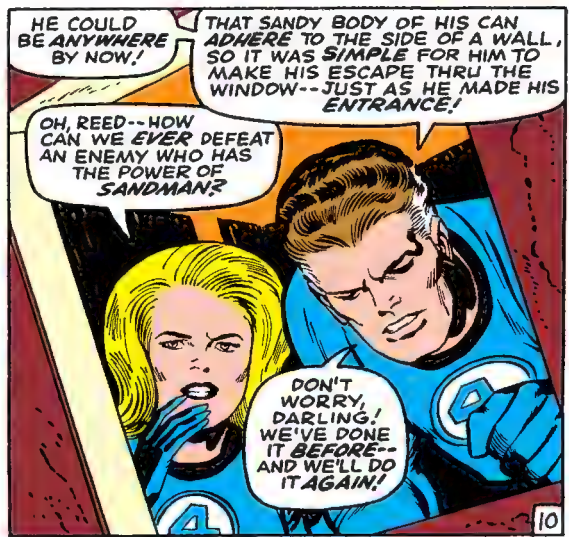
THEN, EXACTLY 300 SECONDS LATER...

HE'S GONE! BUT--LOOK AT YOUR ROOM--!

HE TOOK WHATEVER HE COULD CARRY WITH HIM!

HE MUST HAVE FIGURED THAT EVEN IF HE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT, THE **WIZARD** COULD!

LUCKILY, HE LEFT SOME OF MY MOST **VALUABLE** COMPONENTS BEHIND!



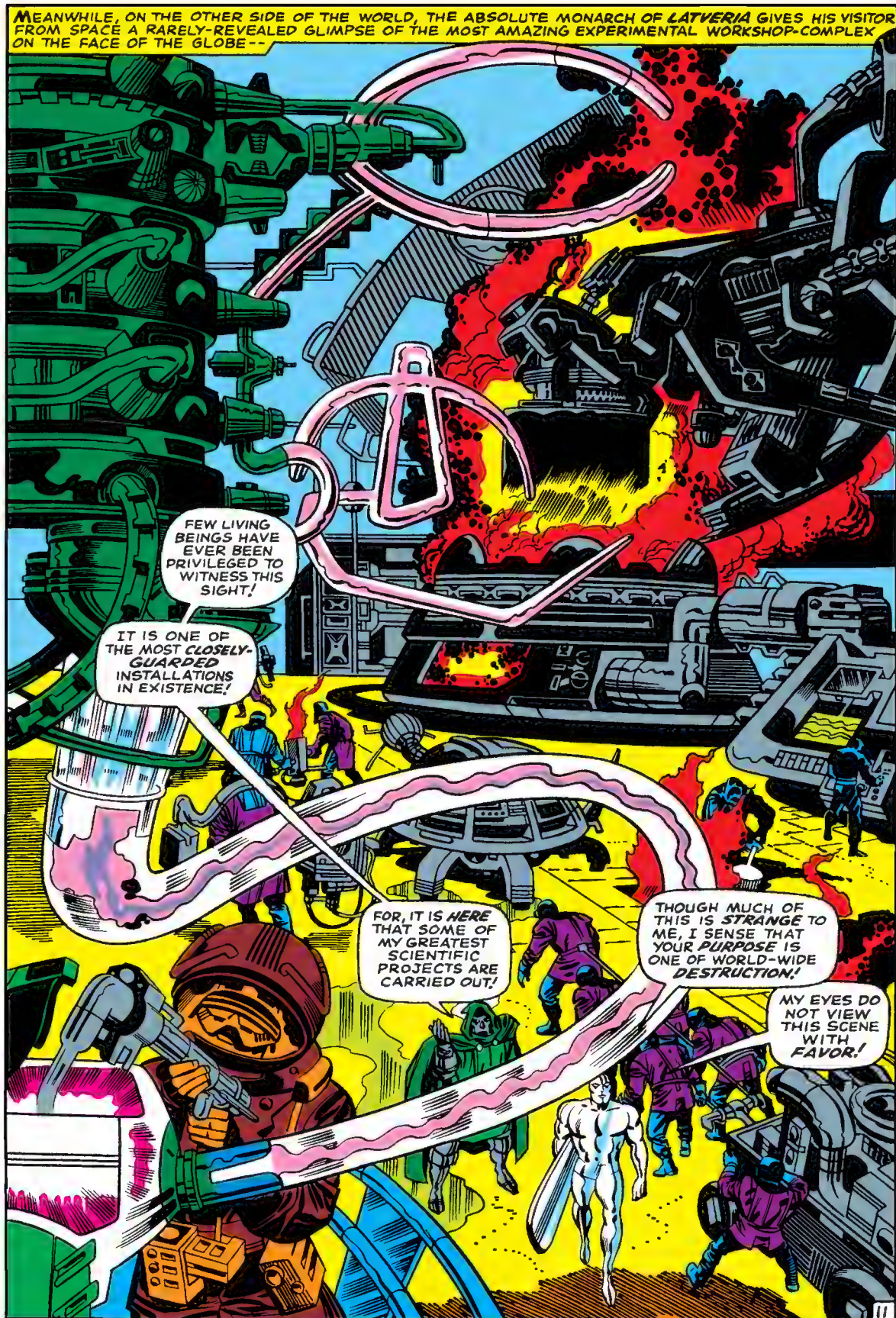
HE COULD BE **ANYWHERE** BY NOW!

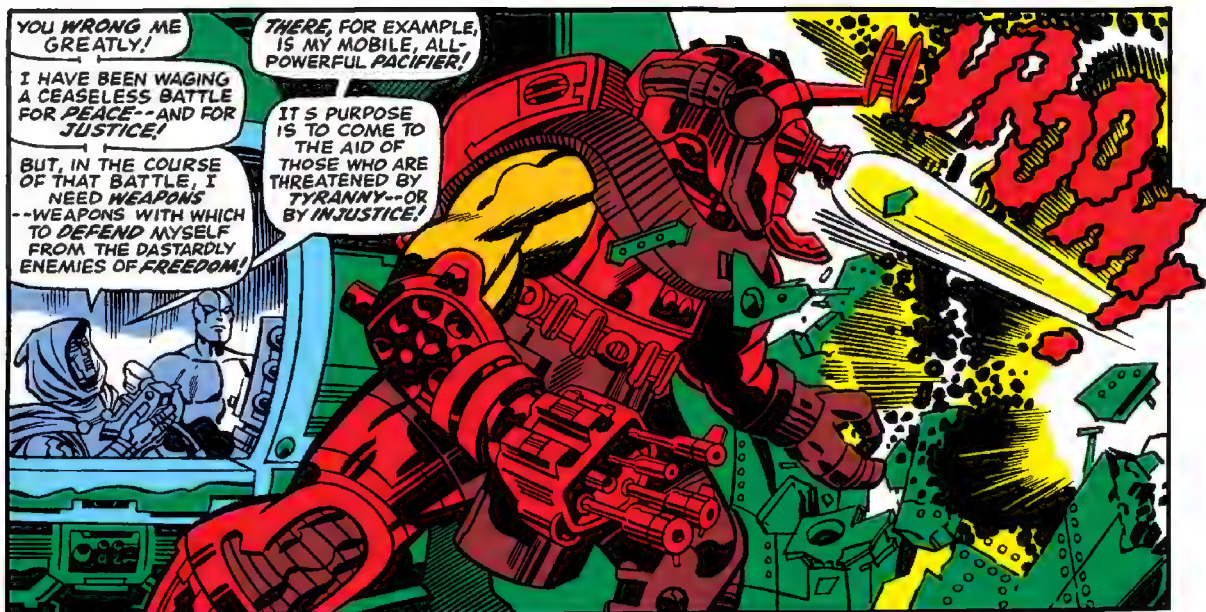
THAT **SANDY** BODY OF HIS CAN ADHERE TO THE SIDE OF A WALL, SO IT WAS **SIMPLE** FOR HIM TO MAKE HIS ESCAPE THRU THE WINDOW--JUST AS HE MADE HIS **ENTRANCE!**

OH, REED--HOW CAN WE **EVER** DEFEAT AN ENEMY WHO HAS THE **POWER** OF **SANDMAN?**

DON'T WORRY, DARLING! WE'VE DONE IT **BEFORE**-- AND WE'LL DO IT **AGAIN!**

MEANWHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, THE ABSOLUTE MONARCH OF LATVERIA GIVES HIS VISITOR FROM SPACE A RARELY-REVEALED GLIMPSE OF THE MOST AMAZING EXPERIMENTAL WORKSHOP-COMPLEX ON THE FACE OF THE GLOBE--





YOU WRONG ME GREATLY!

I HAVE BEEN WAGING A CEASELESS BATTLE FOR PEACE--AND FOR JUSTICE!

BUT, IN THE COURSE OF THAT BATTLE, I NEED WEAPONS--WEAPONS WITH WHICH TO DEFEND MYSELF FROM THE DASTARDLY ENEMIES OF FREEDOM!

THERE, FOR EXAMPLE, IS MY MOBILE, ALL-POWERFUL PACIFIER!

IT'S PURPOSE IS TO COME TO THE AID OF THOSE WHO ARE THREATENED BY TYRANNY--OR BY INJUSTICE!

I SEE THAT THERE IS STILL MUCH FOR ME TO LEARN!

YOUR VOICE MOUTHS SOOTHING WORDS OF PEACE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS--

AND YET, EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING RECOILS AT THE LUST FOR POWER WHICH PERVADES THE VERY ATMOSPHERE ABOUT YOU!

IT IS A PITY THAT YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND--!

ACTUALLY, I AM THE GENTLEST, THE MOST UNAMBITIOUS OF MONARCHS!

MY ONLY DESIRE IS TO MAKE MY PEOPLE HAPPY--AND TO FURTHER THE CAUSE OF PEACE, AND OF BROTHERLY LOVE!

I HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT MY DEVOTED SUBJECTS ACTUALLY DANCE IN THE STREETS, AT THE MEREST MENTION OF MY NAME!

BUT, AT THAT VERY MOMENT--

A THOUSAND PARDONS, SIRE! I DID STUMBLE AGAINST YOUR CLOAK!

CLUMSY DOLT!



YOU DARED LAY A HAND UPON THE SACROSANCT PERSON OF YOUR LORD AND MASTER??!

WORTHLESS, INSUFFERABLE CLOD! DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS??

OH NO, SIRE--NO--NOT--NOT THE ULTIMATE PUNISHMENT??!



THEN, SUDDENLY, DR. DOOM'S GRIP SEEMS TO RELAX, HIS RAGE SEEMS TO SUBSIDE, AS HE SUDDENLY REALIZES THE PRESENCE OF THE SILENT BEING WHO STANDS BESIDE HIM...

NOW, NOW, MY GOOD FELLOW! WHY THIS FOOLISH ALARM? SURELY, YOU DO NOT FEAR YOUR FORGIVING SOVEREIGN!

AN ACCIDENT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE! I AM RELIEVED THAT YOU DID NOT INJURE YOURSELF!



NOW GO, MY LOYAL SUBJECT! TAKE THE REST OF THE DAY OFF, FOR YOU LOOK WAN AND WEARY! WE SHALL SPEAK OF THIS NO MORE!

THEN, I AM FORGIVEN, SIRE? I NEED NOT EXPECT THE ULTIMATE PUNISHMENT? OH, MOST MERCIFUL KING--?

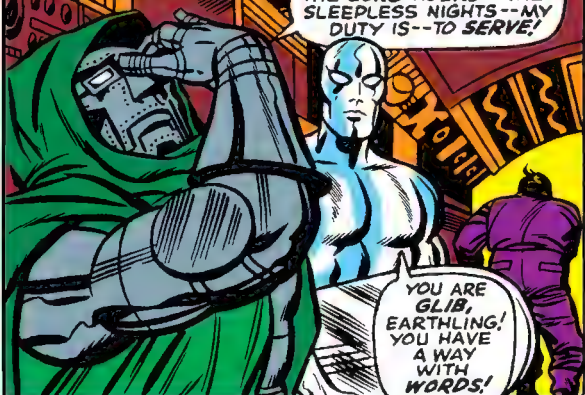


NEVER SHALL I FORGET YOUR KINDNESS, SIRE--YOUR MATCHLESS CHARITY--!

POOR FELLOW! SO DEPENDENT UPON HIS LIEGE! SO TRUSTING! SO INNOCENT!

IT IS NOT A SIMPLE MATTER TO BE A WORTHY MONARCH--TO RULE WITH JUSTICE, AND WITH LOVE!

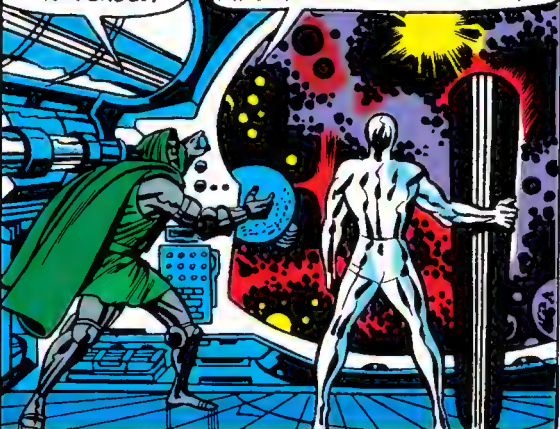
BUT, I TRY! NO MATTER THE LONG HOURS--THE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS--MY DUTY IS--TO SERVE!



YOU ARE GLIB, EARTHLING! YOU HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS!

NO MORE WORDS CAN DO JUSTICE TO THE WONDERS YOU ARE ABOUT TO BEHOLD!

TO PROVE I CREATE THINGS OTHER THAN WEAPONS, LOOK--AN ACTUAL TEMPORAL PHOTO OF THE UNIVERSE, TAKEN BY MY OWN ORBITING SATELLITE!

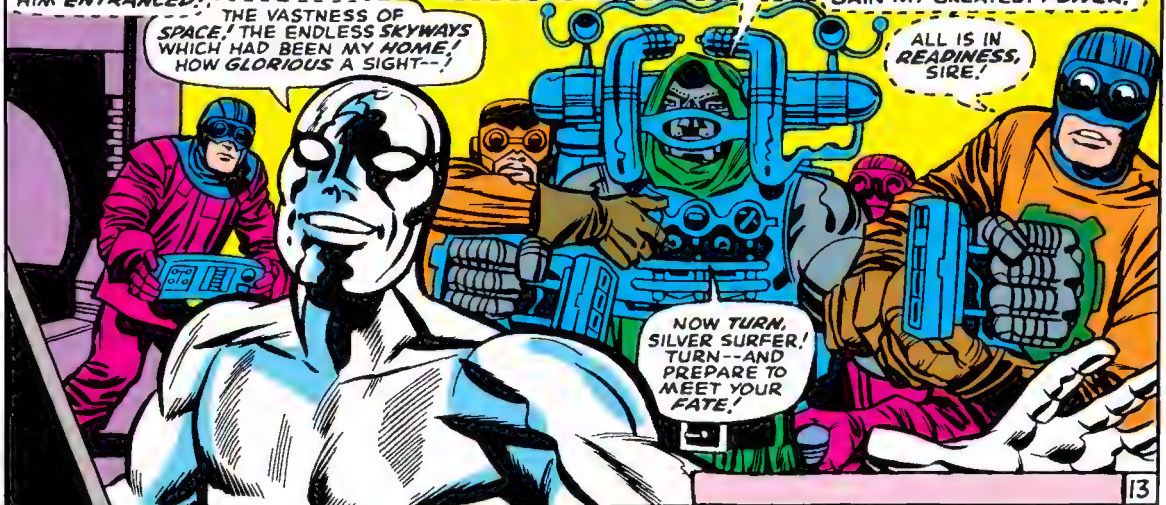


IT WORKED! I KNEW HOW HE MUST MISS THE DEEPS OF SPACE! I KNEW THAT SCENE WOULD HOLD HIM ENTRANCED!

NOW, QUICKLY--PUT THE APPARATUS UPON ME--SILENTLY--CAREFULLY--ONE SLIP NOW, AND YOU WILL ALL PAY FOR YOUR LIVES! THIS SHALL BE MY GREATEST TRIUMPH--NOW I SHALL GAIN MY GREATEST POWER!

THE VASTNESS OF SPACE! THE ENDLESS SKYWAYS WHICH HAD BEEN MY HOME! HOW GLORIOUS A SIGHT--!

ALL IS IN READINESS, SIRE!



NOW TURN, SILVER SURFER! TURN--AND PREPARE TO MEET YOUR FATE!

STARTLED, THE SILVER SPACE WANDERER SPINS ABOUT, ONLY TO HAVE A PAIR OF HIGH INTENSITY INDUCTORS CLAMPED TO HIS HEAD--AND THEN-- BEFORE HE CAN MAKE ANOTHER MOVE--



SIRE! THE SPACE CREATURE STRUGGLES TO FREE HIMSELF!

IT IS TOO LATE FOR HIM! MY INDUCTORS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO DRAW HIS COSMIC POWER INTO MY OWN EQUIPMENT!



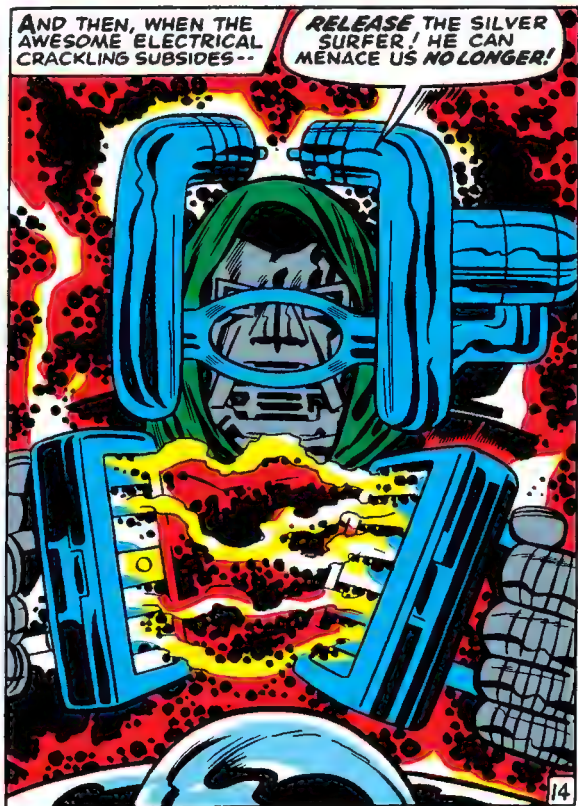
NOW--STAND BACK! SHIELD YOUR EYES! IT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN--!

THE FINAL, MOST POWERFUL RELEASE OF ENERGY--THE LAST COSMIC INTERCHANGE FROM THE SILVER SURFER-- TO DOCTOR DOOM!



AND THEN, WHEN THE AWESOME ELECTRICAL CRACKLING SUBSIDES--

RELEASE THE SILVER SURFER! HE CAN MENACE US NO LONGER!



A full-page comic book illustration. Doctor Doom, in his iconic green robe and silver armor, stands in the center. He is surrounded by a bright yellow and orange energy explosion. In the foreground, the Silver Surfer lies on his back on a red surface, appearing unconscious or defeated. The background is a dark red with black speckles.

NOW, IT IS I
WHO POSSESS
THE COSMIC
POWER WHICH
ONCE WAS
HIS!

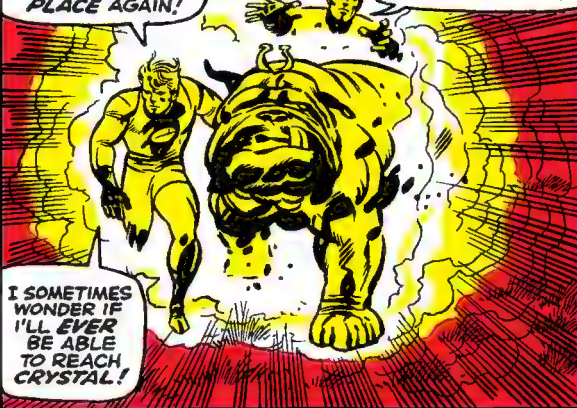
NEVER BEFORE HAS ANY ONE
HUMAN BEING BEEN AS TOTALLY
SUPREME--AS INVINCIBLY
SUPERIOR--AS I!

NOW LET
MANKIND
BEWARE--FOR
DOCTOR DOOM
HAS ATTAINED
POWERS WITHOUT
LIMIT--POWER
ENOUGH TO
CHALLENGE
GALACTUS
HIMSELF!

BUT, THE WORKINGS OF AN INSCRUTIBLE FATE ARE STRANGE INDEED! FOR, EVEN AS THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL ARCH-VILLAIN STANDS AT THE VERY PINNACLE OF HIS NEFARIOUS CAREER, A WEARY, DISCOURAGED HUMAN TORCH EXPERIENCES ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF SEEMINGLY ENDLESS FAILURES--

ANOTHER STRIKE-OUT, WYATT! LOCKJAW BROUGHT US TO THE WRONG PLACE AGAIN!

IT'S SOME SORT OF TOTALLY DIFFERENT DIMENSION--FURTHER FROM EARTH THAN HE'S EVER TRANSPORTED US!



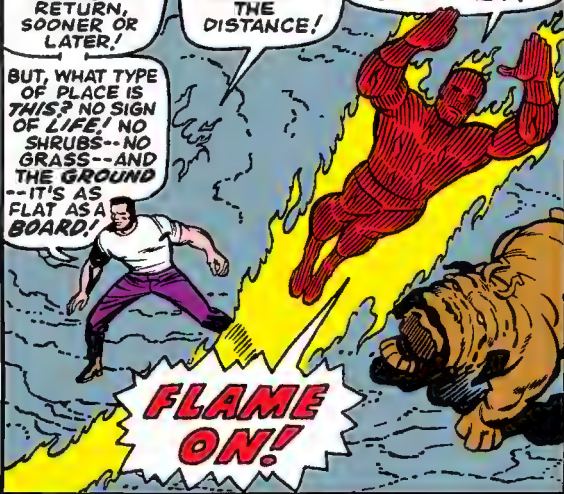
I SOMETIMES WONDER IF I'LL EVER BE ABLE TO REACH CRYSTAL!

DON'T DESPAIR, JOHNNY! HE'LL BRING US TO THE INHUMANS SOME DAY-- HE HAS TO RETURN, SOONER OR LATER!

ALL I SEEM TO HEAR ARE STRANGE, BOOMING SOUNDS-- FROM OFF IN THE DISTANCE!

GOOD! THAT'LL GIVE ME SOMETHING TO DO! SIT TIGHT, BIG BUDDY--I'LL FLY OFF AND INVESTIGATE THEM!

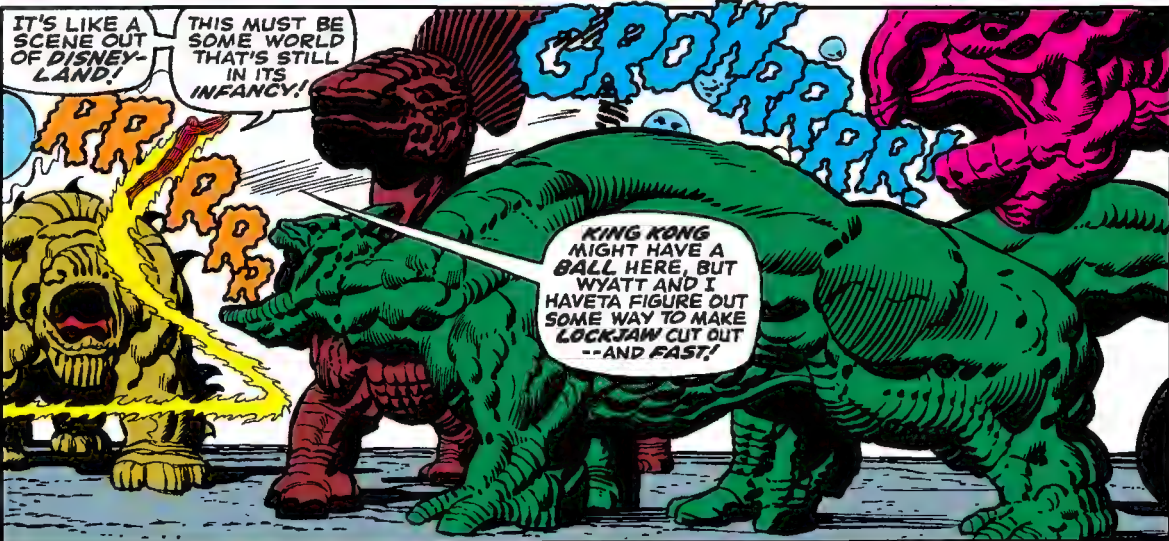
BUT, WHAT TYPE OF PLACE IS THIS? NO SIGN OF LIFE! NO SHRUBS--NO GRASS--AND THE GROUND--IT'S AS FLAT AS A BOARD!



FLAME ON!

IT'S LIKE A SCENE OUT OF DISNEY-LAND!

THIS MUST BE SOME WORLD THAT'S STILL IN ITS INFANCY!

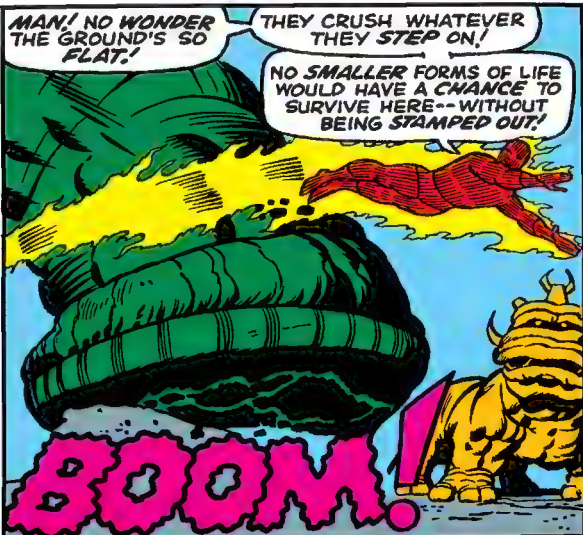


KING KONG MIGHT HAVE A BALL HERE, BUT WYATT AND I HAVETA FIGURE OUT SOME WAY TO MAKE LOCKJAW CUT OUT --AND FAST!

MAN! NO WONDER THE GROUND'S SO FLAT!

THEY CRUSH WHATEVER THEY STEP ON!

NO SMALLER FORMS OF LIFE WOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO SURVIVE HERE--WITHOUT BEING STAMPED OUT!

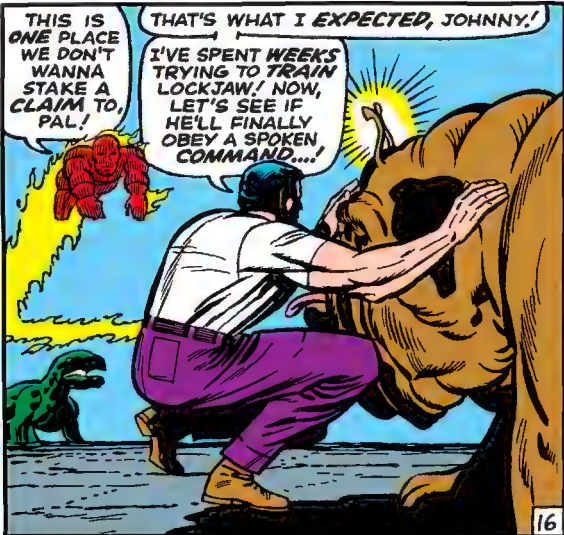


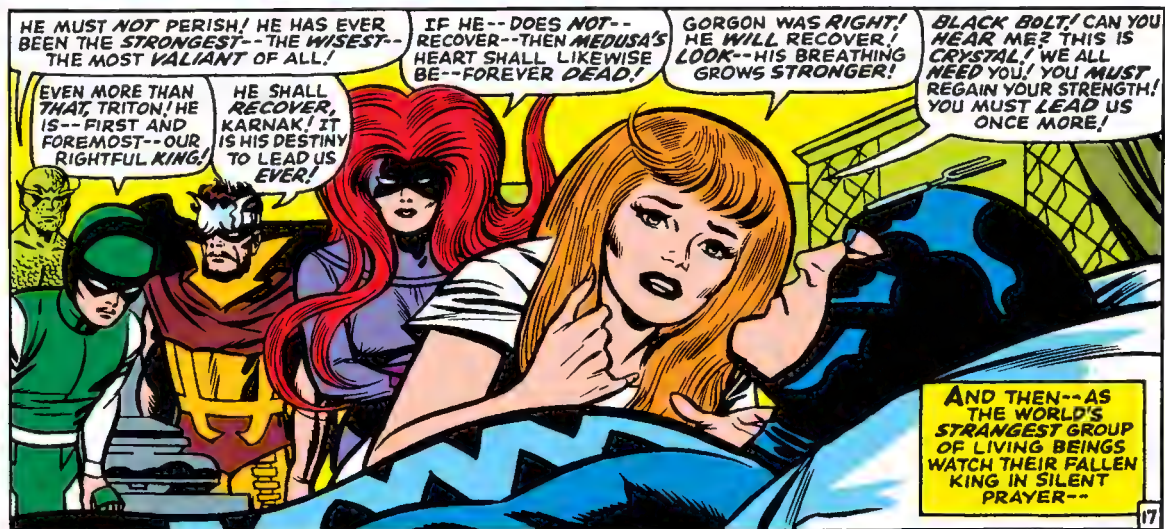
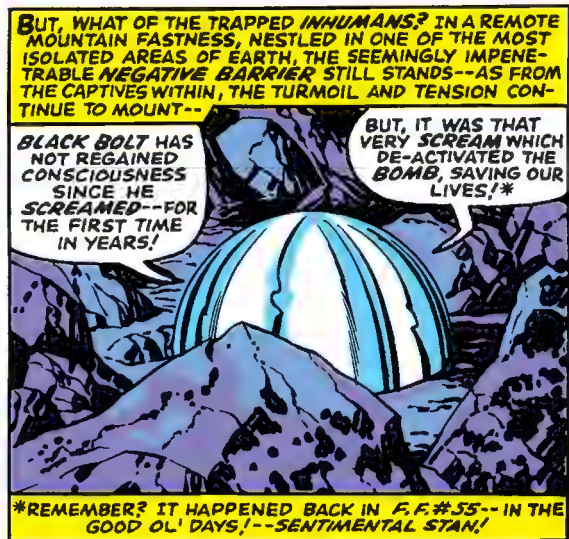
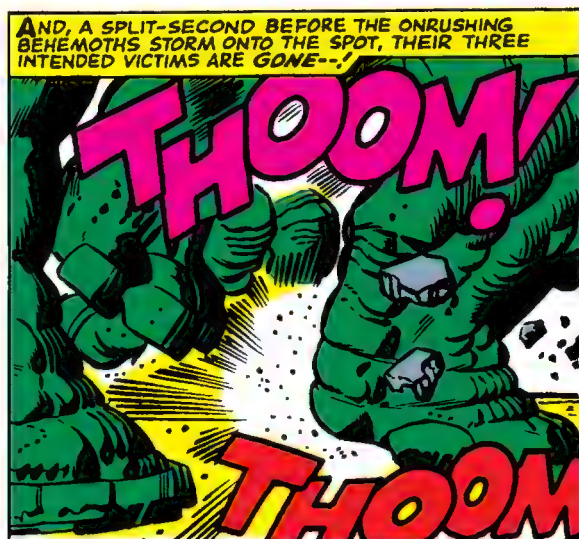
BOOM!

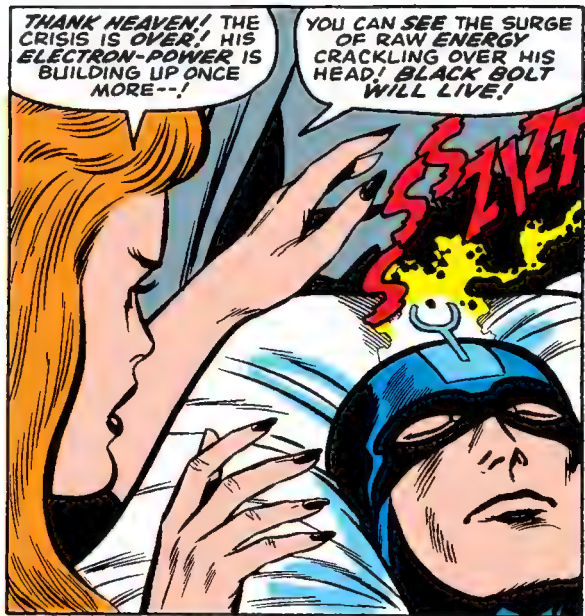
THIS IS ONE PLACE WE DON'T WANNA STAKE A CLAIM TO, PAL!

THAT'S WHAT I EXPECTED, JOHNNY!

I'VE SPENT WEEKS TRYING TO TRAIN LOCKJAW! NOW, LET'S SEE IF HE'LL FINALLY OBEY A SPOKEN COMMAND....!







THANK HEAVEN! THE CRISIS IS OVER! HIS ELECTRON-POWER IS BUILDING UP ONCE MORE--!

YOU CAN SEE THE SURGE OF RAW ENERGY CRACKLING OVER HIS HEAD! BLACK BOLT WILL LIVE!



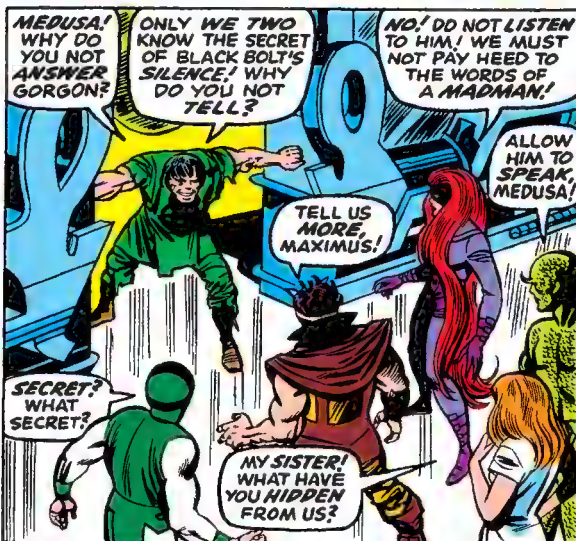
WHEN HE AWAKES-- HE WILL SPEAK TO US! HE HAS REGAINED HIS VOICE-- AT LAST!

BUT, THERE IS MORE TO THIS THAN MEETS THE EYE!

WHY WAS HE ABLE TO UTTER A SOUND WHEN THREATENED BY THE BOMB-- BUT NEVER BEFORE?

YOU KNOW HIM BETTER THAN ANY, MEDUSA! WHAT SAY YOU?

WAIT! STAND BACK! THE MAD MAXIMUS IS APPROACHING!



MEDUSA! WHY DO YOU NOT ANSWER GORGON?

ONLY WE TWO KNOW THE SECRET OF BLACK BOLT'S SILENCE! WHY DO YOU NOT TELL?

NO! DO NOT LISTEN TO HIM! WE MUST NOT PAY HEED TO THE WORDS OF A MADMAN!

ALLOW HIM TO SPEAK, MEDUSA!

TELL US MORE, MAXIMUS!

SECRET? WHAT SECRET?

MY SISTER! WHAT HAVE YOU HIDDEN FROM US?



YOU HAVE COACHED HER WELL, BLACK BOLT--HAVE YOU NOT? SHE WOULD NEVER BETRAY THE SECRET OF THE ONE SHE LOVES!

BUT, THERE IS NO LOVE LOST BETWEEN US TWO, MY BROTHER!

THEREFORE, MAXIMUS IS FREE TO TELL ALL--!

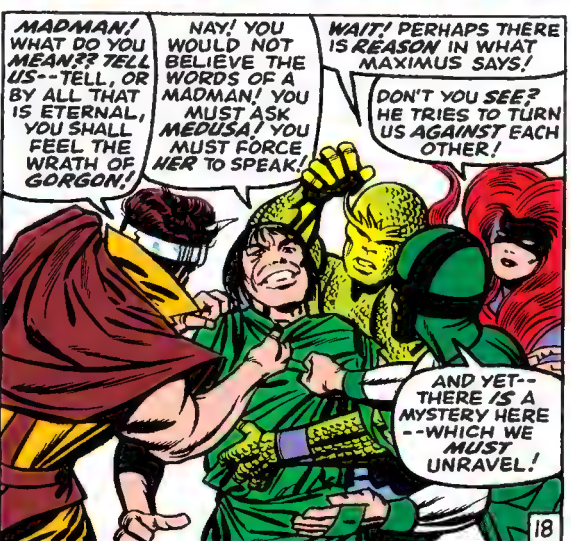


IN TRUTH, WHAT A FANTASTIC JEST IT IS! BLACK BOLT HAS EVER POSSESSED THE ABILITY TO SPEAK!

BUT, HE REFUSES TO DO SO!

HE REFUSES--THOUGH HE KNOWS FULL WELL--WHEN BLACK BOLT TALKS--YOU'LL ALL BE FREE!

YOU DEVIL!



MADMAN! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?? TELL US--TELL, OR BY ALL THAT IS ETERNAL, YOU SHALL FEEL THE WRATH OF GORGON!

NAY! YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE THE WORDS OF A MADMAN! YOU MUST ASK MEDUSA! YOU MUST FORCE HER TO SPEAK!

WAIT! PERHAPS THERE IS REASON IN WHAT MAXIMUS SAYS!

DON'T YOU SEE? HE TRIES TO TURN US AGAINST EACH OTHER!

AND YET--THERE IS A MYSTERY HERE--WHICH WE MUST UNRAVEL!

BUT, THERE IS STILL ANOTHER MYSTERY TO BE UNRAVELLED--A FAR GREATER MYSTERY--A FAR MORE DEADLY ONE--WITH THE FATE OF ALL MANKIND HINGING ON ITS OUTCOME! THUS, WE TURN ONCE MORE TO THE KINGDOM OF LATVERIA, WHERE WE FIND--

SEE? THE RUMORS ARE TRUE! OUR MONARCH'S CASTLE GLOWS WITH STRANGE, UNEARTHLY LIGHT!

EVERY SUBJECT OF THE REALM HAS BEEN COMMANDED TO SHUN THE PLACE WHERE DWELLS DOCTOR DOOM!

NEVER HAVE MY EYES BEHELD SO MACABRE--SO MENACING A SIGHT!

'TIS LIKE SOME GHASTLY, GRIM TABLEAU--NOT MEANT FOR HUMAN EYES!

WE MUST LEAVE! HAVE YOU NOT HEARD? IT IS WHISPERED THAT OUR KING HAS MADE A PACT WITH SATAN HIMSELF!



AND THEN, AS THOUGH TO LEND SUBSTANCE TO THE FEARS OF THE AWE-STRICKEN VILLAGERS--

LOOK! IN THE SKY ABOVE! WHAT MAD NIGHTMARE IS NOW A'BORNING!

WE WERE RIGHT! 'TIS THE DEVIL'S OWN HANDIWORK THAT APPEARS BEFORE US!



WE MUST HIDE--LOSE OURSELVES IN THE FOREST YONDER--BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

FLEE! WE ARE POSSESSED OF EVIL DEMONS!

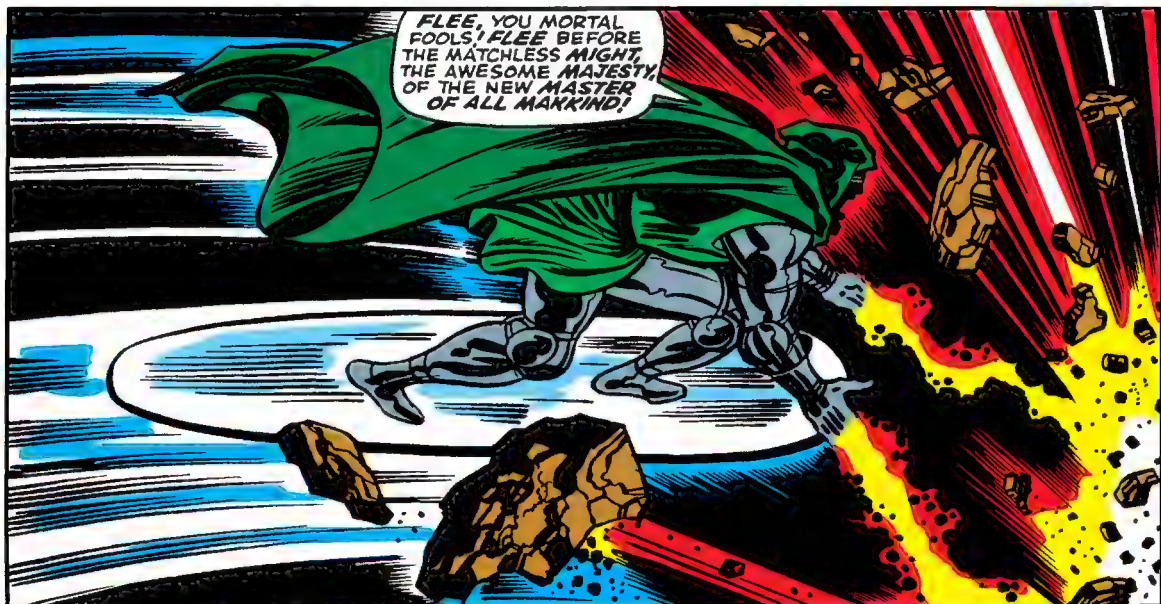


AND, IN TRUTH, IS IT NOT A DEMON WHO NOW ROCKETS HIGH OVERHEAD?? A DEMON IN HUMAN FORM!

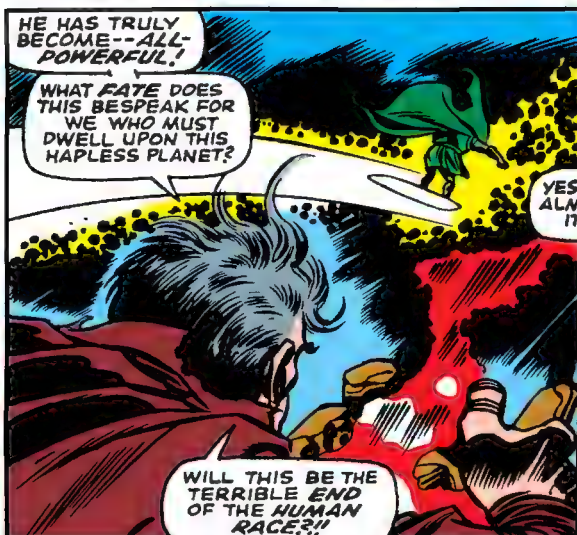
ALL THE POWER OF THE SILVER SURFER NOW IS MINE!

THE WORLD ITSELF BELONGS TO--DOCTOR DOOM!





FLEE, YOU MORTAL FOOLS! FLEE BEFORE THE MATCHLESS MIGHT, THE AWESOME MAJESTY, OF THE NEW MASTER OF ALL MAKING!

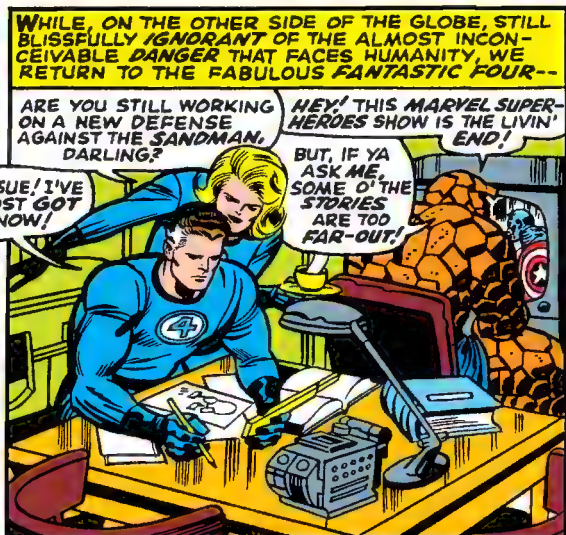


HE HAS TRULY BECOME--ALL-POWERFUL!

WHAT FATE DOES THIS BESPEAK FOR WE WHO MUST DWELL UPON THIS HAPLESS PLANET?

WILL THIS BE THE TERRIBLE END OF THE HUMAN RACE?!!

YES, SUE, I'VE ALMOST GOT IT NOW!

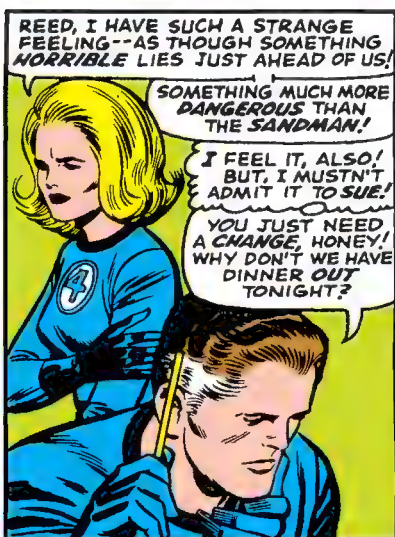


WHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLOBE, STILL BLISSFULLY IGNORANT OF THE ALMOST INCONCEIVABLE DANGER THAT FACES HUMANITY, WE RETURN TO THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR--

ARE YOU STILL WORKING ON A NEW DEFENSE AGAINST THE SANDMAN, DARLING?

HEY! THIS MARVEL SUPER-HEROES SHOW IS THE LIVIN' END!

BUT, IF YA ASK ME, SOME O' THE STORIES ARE TOO FAR-OUT!



REED, I HAVE SUCH A STRANGE FEELING--AS THOUGH SOMETHING HORRIBLE LIES JUST AHEAD OF US!

SOMETHING MUCH MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE SANDMAN!

I FEEL IT, ALSO! BUT, I MUSTN'T ADMIT IT TO SUE!

YOU JUST NEED A CHANGE, HONEY! WHY DON'T WE HAVE DINNER OUT TONIGHT?

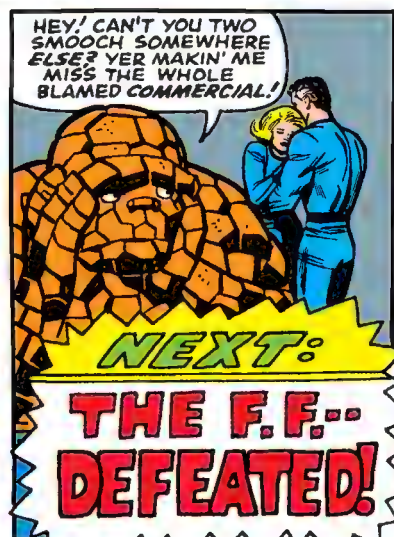


AFTER ALL, WE CAN WORRY ABOUT SUPER-VILLAINS ANY TIME--BUT, HOW OFTEN DO I GET A CHANCE TO SHOW OFF THE PRETTIEST GAL IN TOWN?

SUE--SWEETHEART--PLEASE! YOU'VE GOT TO SNAP OUT OF IT!

I CAN'T HELP IT, DEAR, I'VE NEVER FELT SO--SO APPREHENSIVE!

SOME MAY LAUGH AT A WOMAN'S INTUITION--BUT--SUE'S NEVER BEEN WRONG BEFORE!



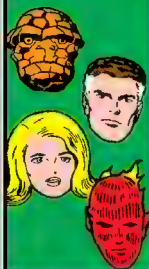
HEY! CAN'T YOU TWO SMOOCH SOMEWHERE ELSE? YER MAKIN' ME MISS THE WHOLE BLAMED COMMERCIAL!

NEXT:

THE F.F. DEFEATED!

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE



MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP

12¢

58
JAN

Fantastic Four

"THE DISMAL
DREGS OF
DEFEAT!"



HAVE THE FABULOUS F.F. FINALLY REACHED THE END OF THE TRAIL?

"THE DISMAL DREGS OF DEFEAT!"

THE MOST DIABOLICALLY DANGEROUS ARCH-VILLAIN THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN NOW POSSESSES THE COSMIC POWER OF THE SILVER SURFER HIMSELF!

IT HAPPENED LAST ISH-- AND YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, BECAUSE THERE'S NO MORE TIME TO EXPLAIN--

I HEARD'A CASES WHERE IT RAINED CATS N DOGS BEFORE-- BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!

DURING A SUDDEN THUNDERSTORM, ATOP THE FAMED BAXTER BUILDING, THE LIGHTNING FLASHES SUDDENLY REVEAL THE ASPECT OF--

DOCTOR DOOM!!
LOOK, REED--!!
IT'S HIM!

EASY, HONEY!
DON'T PANIC!
IT'S JUST SOME SORT OF VISUAL ILLUSION, CAUSED BY THE ELECTRICAL STORM!

STAN LEE A JACK KIRBY
POWERHOUSE PRODUCTION

INKED BY:
JOE SINNOTT
LETTERED BY:
ARTIE SIMEK

BUT THEN, WITH THE NEXT BURST OF LIGHTNING--THE APPARITION SEEMS TO CHANGE, AS IT TAKES ON THE ENTIRE HUMAN FORM OF THE MOST EVIL MAN ALIVE--!

IT CAN'T BE! A FREAK ELECTRICAL MIRAGE CAN'T HAPPEN TWICE IN A ROW--NOT IN THE IMAGE OF THE SAME PERSON!!

THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN A CASUAL PHENOMENON OF NATURE--BUT, I MUSTN'T LET SUE BECOME ALARMED!

HEAD FOR THE STAIRS! LET'S GET BACK INSIDE! THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO OUT HERE!

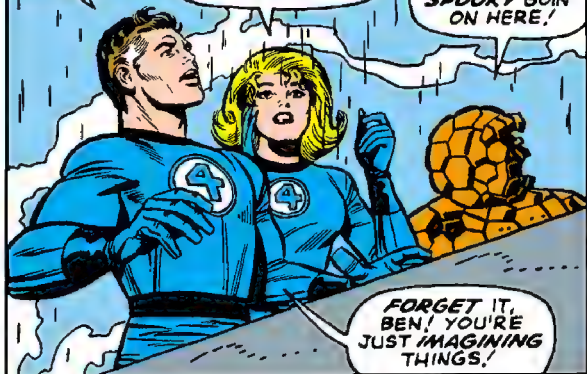


BUT, EVEN BEFORE THEY CAN REACH THE PRIVATE STAIRWAY--

THE STORM HAS ENDED! THE LIGHTNING IS GONE!

IT HAPPENED SO FAST! ONE MINUTE--LIKE A TROPICAL MONSOON--AND NOW--IT'S LIKE A FADING SUN-SHOWER!

I DON'T LIKE IT! I NEVER SAW NO RAIN-STORM LIKE THAT BEFORE! THERE'S SOMETHIN' SPOOKY GOIN' ON HERE!



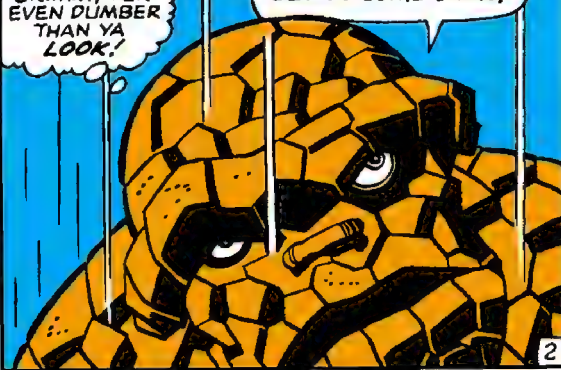
FORGET IT, BEN! YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS!

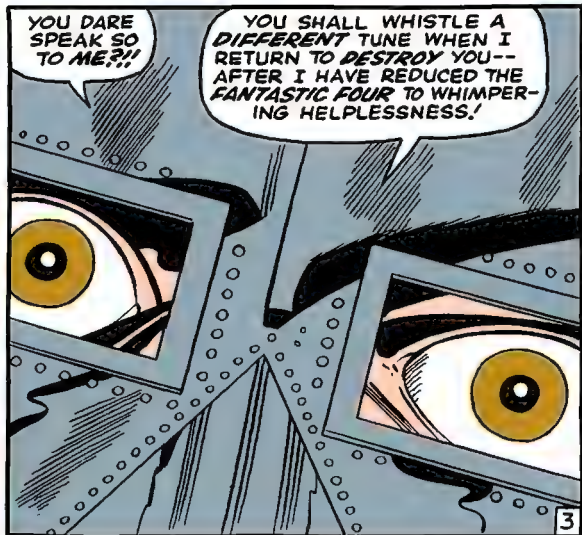
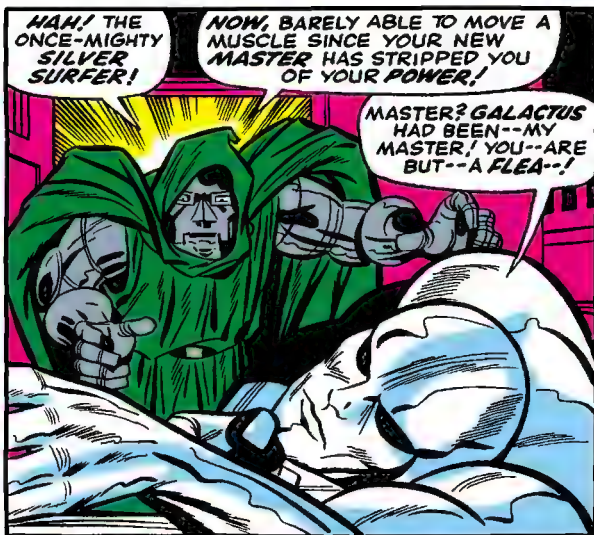
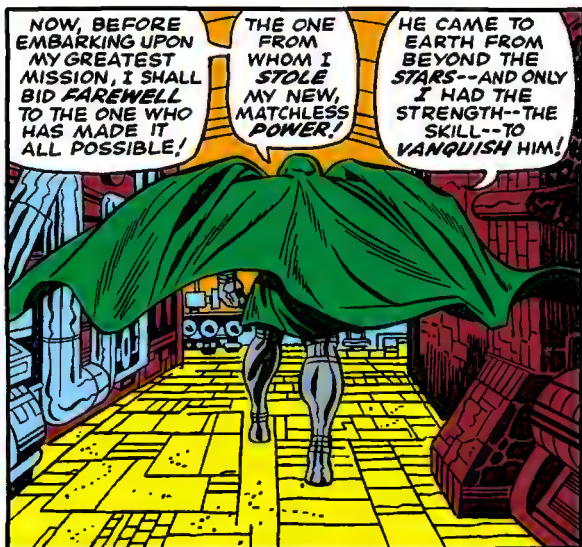
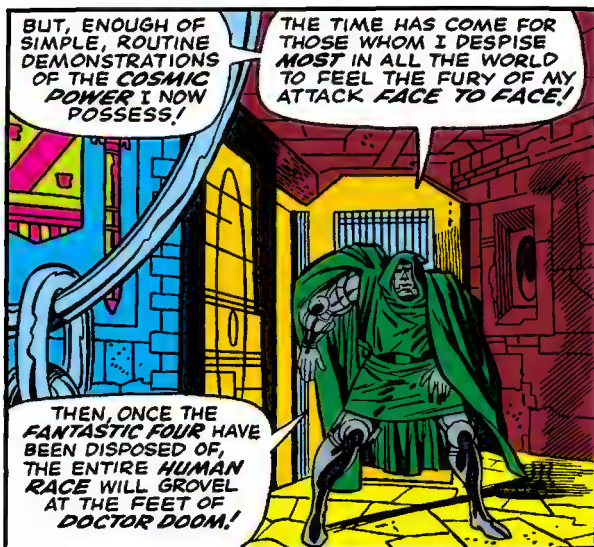
I'MAGININ' THINGS?!! LISTEN, STRETCH--WHO THE BLAZES DO YA THINK YER--OH UN!!

GRIMM, YER EVEN DUMBER THAN YA LOOK!

HE KNOWS BLAMED WELL WHAT THE SCORE IS--BUT HE DON'T WANNA UPSET SUSIE! I SHOULD'VE FIGGERED THAT!

WELL, WHAT'RE WE WAITIN' ON? LET'S GET US SOME CHOW!

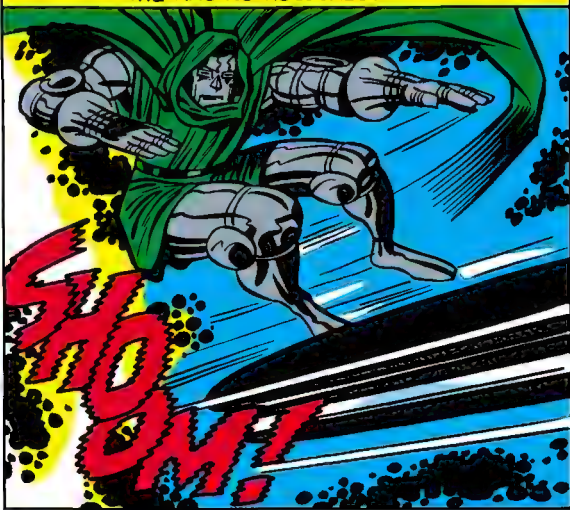




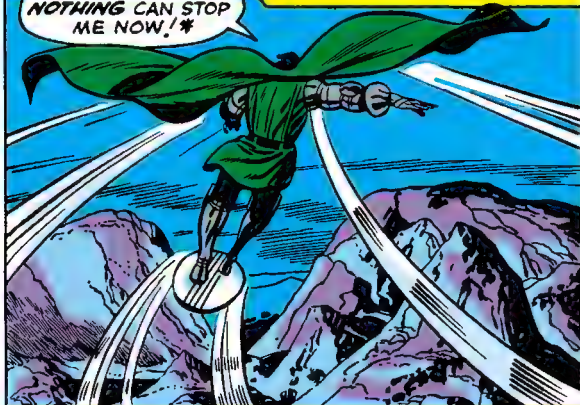
SECONDS LATER, A BLAST OF SHEER UNDILUTED COSMIC ENERGY DISPERSES THE VERY MOLECULES OF THE CASTLE WALL...



AND, WHEN THE CRACKLING, SEARING FORCE REACHES ITS MAXIMUM INTENSITY, AN ARMORED, CLOAKED FIGURE--AND AN UNEARTHLY SURF-BOARD, HURTLE SKYWARD FROM THE CENTER OF THE RAGING HOLOCAUST--



LIKE SOME PREDATORY WINGED MONSTER FROM ANOTHER AGE--ANOTHER UNIVERSE-- THE INCREDIBLE ARCH-FIEND ZOOMS WESTWARD--AT A SPEED WHICH VIRTUALLY DEFIES BELIEF--!



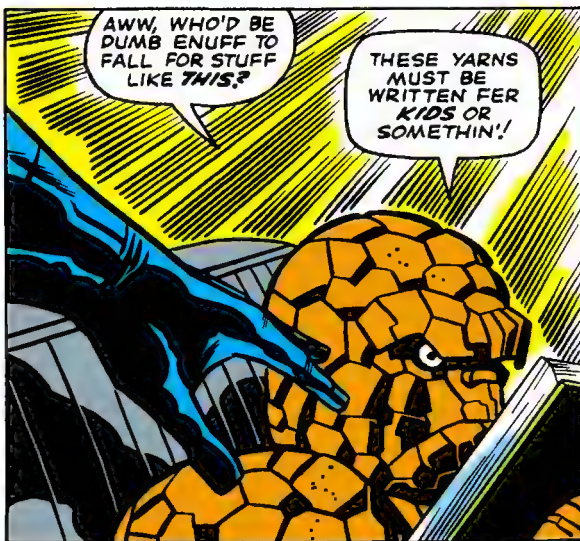
*WHO SAYS THIS ISN'T THE MARVEL AGE OF CALLOUS CLICHÉS? -- SHAMEFACED STAN.

SOME TIME LATER, AS A DEEPLY ENGROSSSED, ORANGE-SKINNED LITERATURE LOVER PURSUES HIS RELENTLESS QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE--



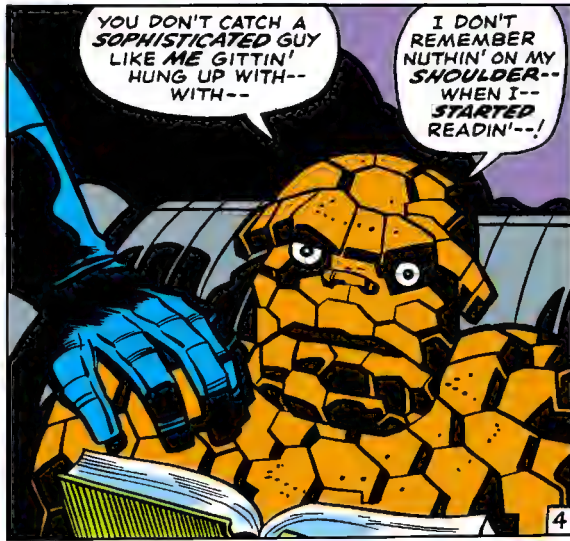
I WONDER IF THERE REALLY ARE SUCH THINGS AS HAUNTED HOUSES?

PROBABLY NOT, OR STRETCHO WOULD'A CONNED ME INTO SPENDIN' A NIGHT IN ONE BY NOW!



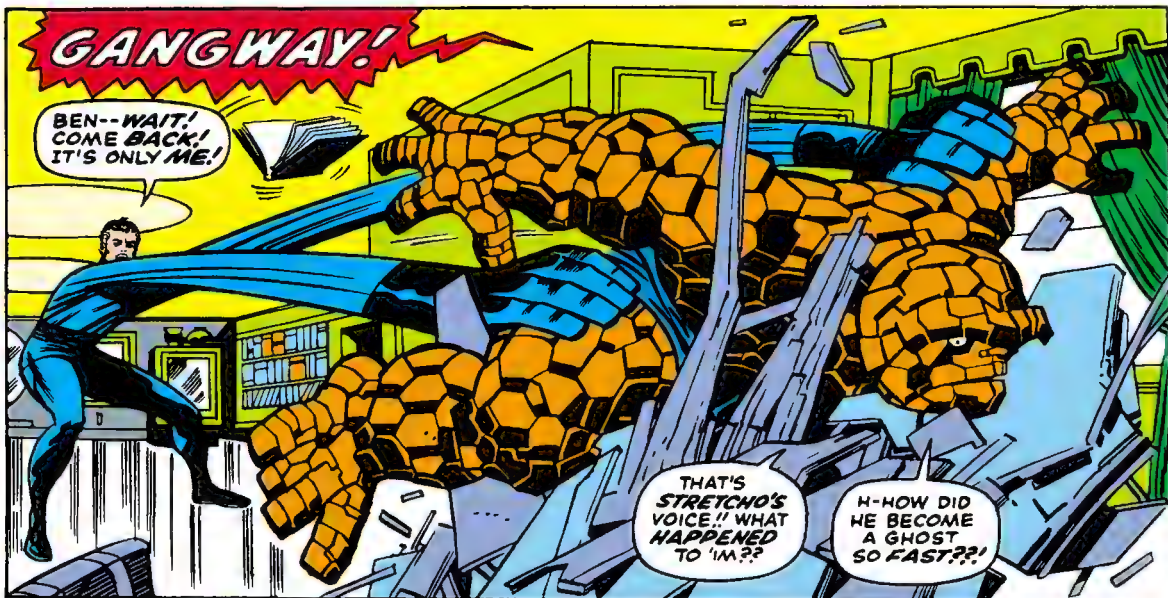
AWW, WHO'D BE DUMB ENUFF TO FALL FOR STUFF LIKE THIS?

THESE YARNS MUST BE WRITTEN FER KIDS OR SOMETHIN'!



YOU DON'T CATCH A SOPHISTICATED GUY LIKE ME GITTIN' HUNG UP WITH-- WITH--

I DON'T REMEMBER NUTHIN' ON MY SHOULDER-- WHEN I-- STARTED READIN'--!



GANGWAY!

BEN-- WAIT!
COME BACK!
IT'S ONLY ME!

THAT'S
STRETCH'S
VOICE!! WHAT
HAPPENED
TO 'IM??

H-HOW DID
HE BECOME
A GHOST
SO FAST??!

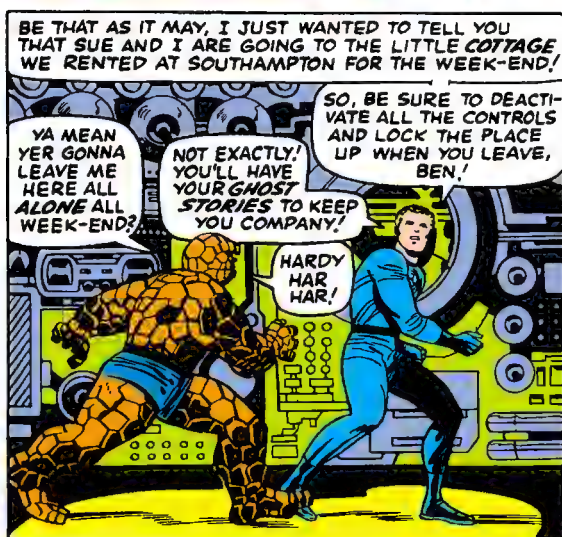


WHAT'S BOTHERING
YOU, BIG FELLA?
I'VE NEVER KNOWN
YOU TO BE SO
JUMPY BEFORE!

~WHEN!~
IT REALLY
IS YOU!
THEN-- YOU
AINT-- I
MEAN--
~EH--
SNEEESH!

WHO'S JUMPY!
I WUZ JUST
PRACTICIN' MY
ISOMETRIC PANIC
LESSONS!

ANYWAY, YA
SHOULDN'T OUGHTTA
SNEAK UP ON A GUY
THAT WAY! IT AINT
COUTH!



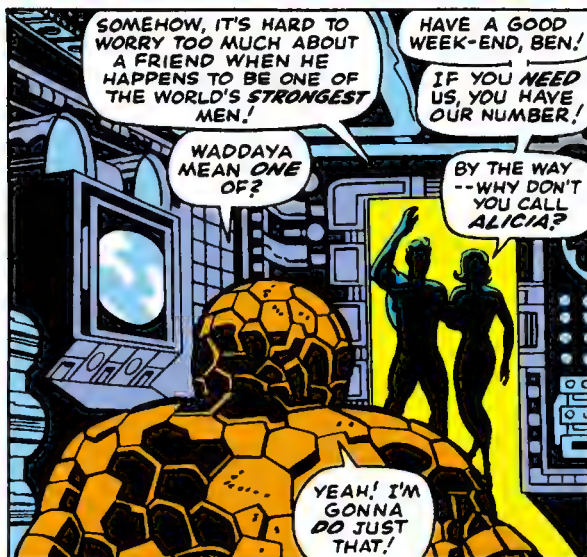
BE THAT AS IT MAY, I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU
THAT SUE AND I ARE GOING TO THE LITTLE COTTAGE
WE RENTED AT SOUTHAMPTON FOR THE WEEK-END!

YA MEAN
YER GONNA
LEAVE ME
HERE ALL
ALONE ALL
WEEK-END?

NOT EXACTLY!
YOU'LL HAVE
YOUR GHOST
STORIES TO KEEP
YOU COMPANY!

SO, BE SURE TO DEACTI-
VATE ALL THE CONTROLS
AND LOCK THE PLACE
UP WHEN YOU LEAVE,
BEN!

HARDY
HAR
HAR!



SOMEHOW, IT'S HARD TO
WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT
A FRIEND WHEN HE
HAPPENS TO BE ONE OF
THE WORLD'S STRONGEST
MEN!

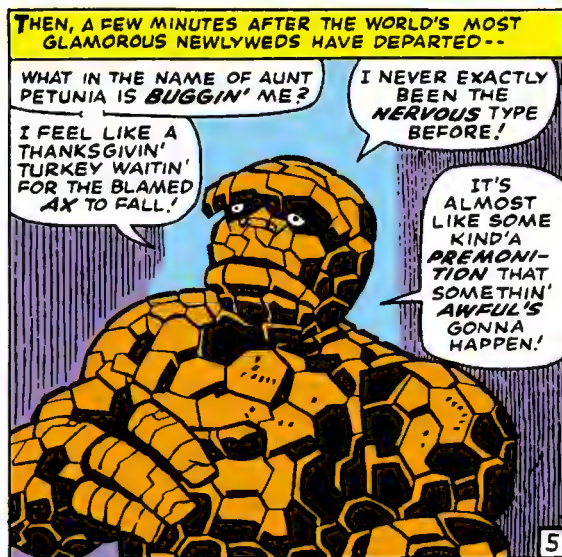
HAVE A GOOD
WEEK-END, BEN!

IF YOU NEED
US, YOU HAVE
OUR NUMBER!

WADDAYA
MEAN ONE
OF?

BY THE WAY
--WHY DON'T
YOU CALL
ALICIA?

YEAH! I'M
GONNA
DO JUST
THAT!



THEN, A FEW MINUTES AFTER THE WORLD'S MOST
GLAMOROUS NEWLYWEDS HAVE DEPARTED--

WHAT IN THE NAME OF AUNT
PETUNIA IS BUGGIN' ME?

I NEVER EXACTLY
BEEN THE
NERVOUS TYPE
BEFORE!

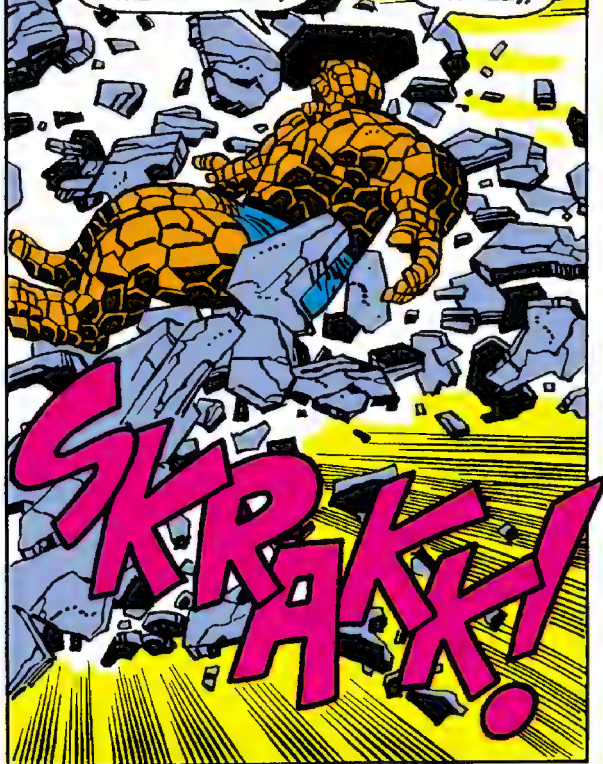
I FEEL LIKE A
THANKSGIVIN'
TURKEY WAITIN'
FOR THE BLAMED
AX TO FALL!

IT'S
ALMOST
LIKE SOME
KIND'A
PREMONI-
TION THAT
SOMETHIN'
AWFUL'S
GONNA
HAPPEN!

AT THAT SPLIT-SECOND, AS THOUGH CUED BY SOME UNSEEN, OMNIPOTENT STAGE DIRECTOR, BEN GRIMM'S WHOLE WORLD SEEMS TO COME CRASHING DOWN AROUND HIM--!

HOLY HANNAH!!
SOMETHIN'S PULLIN'
ME OUTSIDE--!

CLEAN THRU
THE WHOLE
BLASTED
WALL!!



IT'S DOOM--
AND HE'S FOR
REAL THIS
TIME!!

BUT--I DON'T GIT IT!! HE'S
RIDIN' THE SILVER SURFER'S
OWN BOARD!!

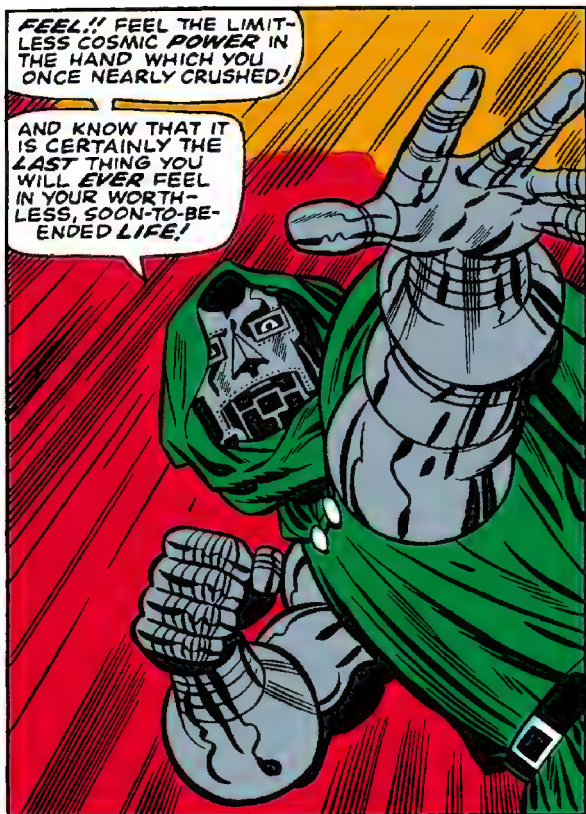
YOU INSUFFERABLE
--UNSPEAKABLE
BLOT ON THE
ESCUTCHEON OF
HUMANITY--

PREPARE TO
MEET THE
FATE YOU
SO SORELY
DESERVE!!



FEEL!! FEEL THE LIMIT-
LESS COSMIC POWER IN
THE HAND WHICH YOU
ONCE NEARLY CRUSHED!

AND KNOW THAT IT
IS CERTAINLY THE
LAST THING YOU
WILL EVER FEEL
IN YOUR WORTH-
LESS, SOON-TO-BE-
ENDED LIFE!

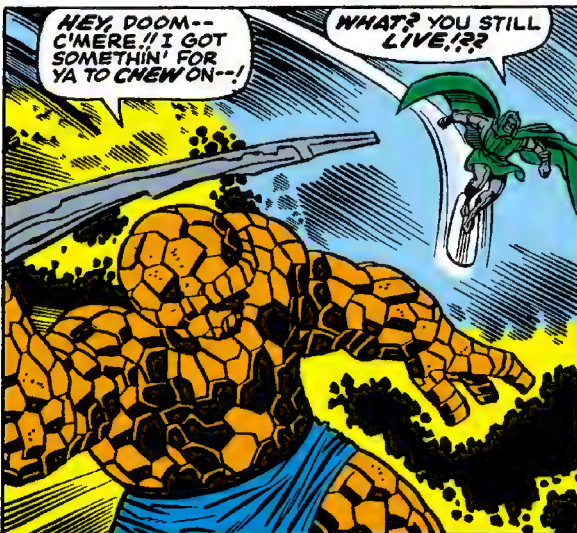
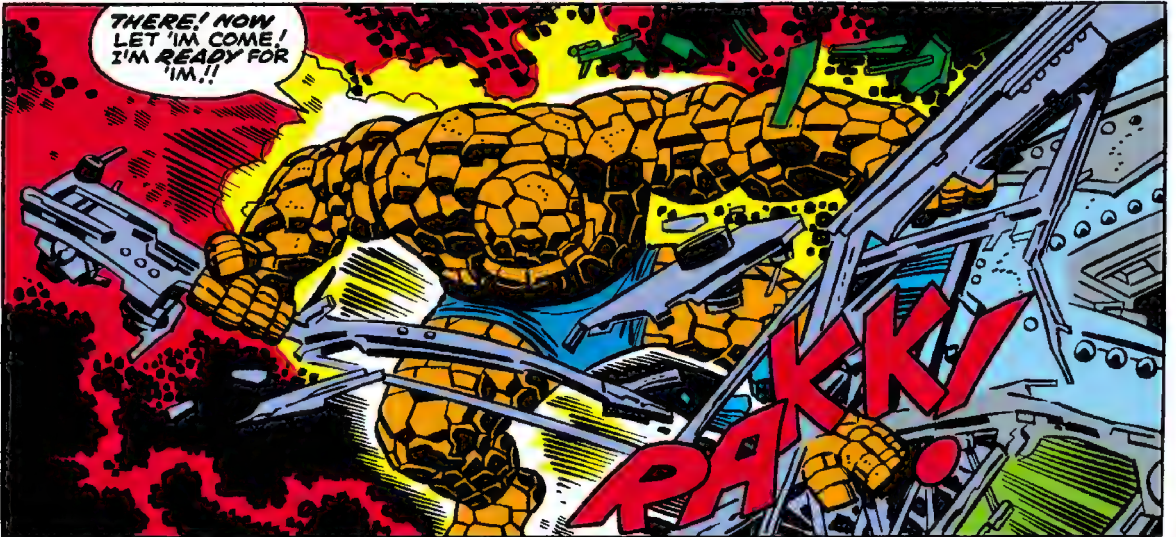
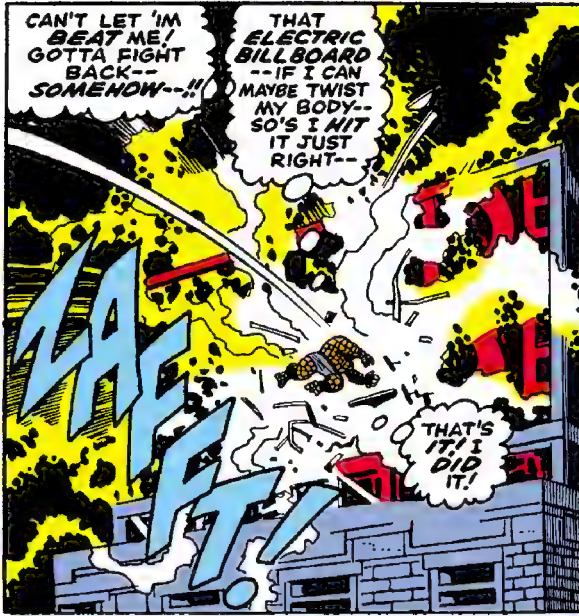


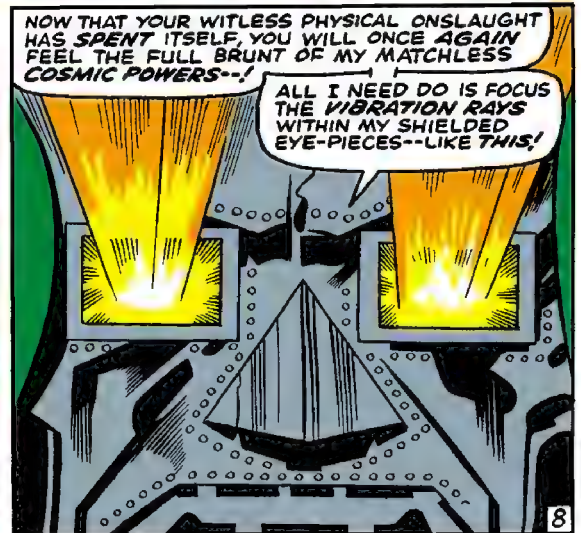
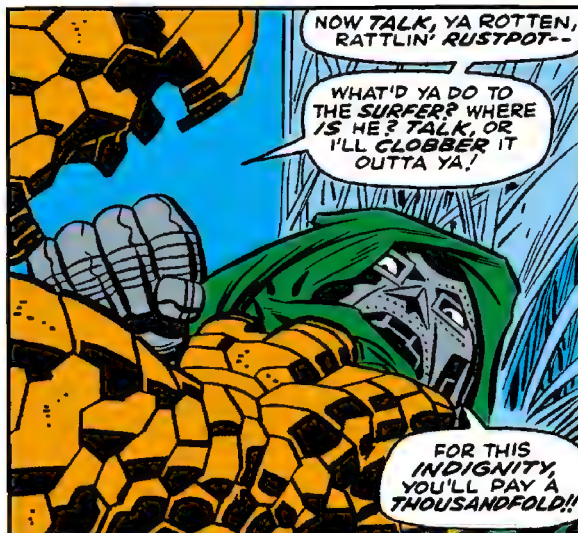
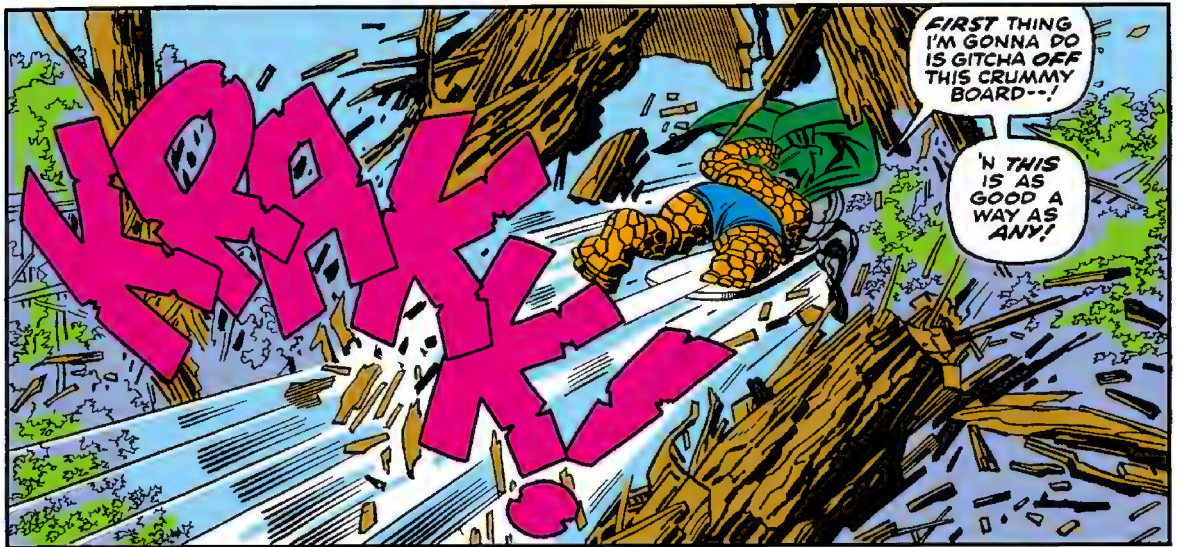
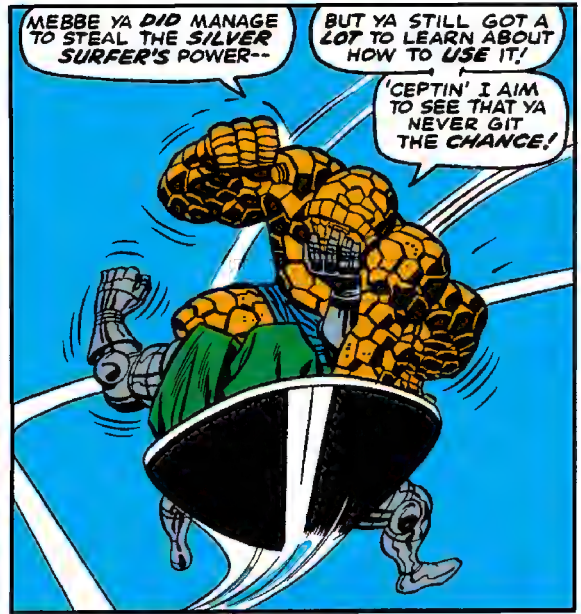
I DUNNO HOW HE DID IT--
BUT HE GOT THE SURFER'S
BOARD--AND HE MANAGED
TO GET LOT'S A HIS CRAZY
OUTER-SPACE POWER, TOO!

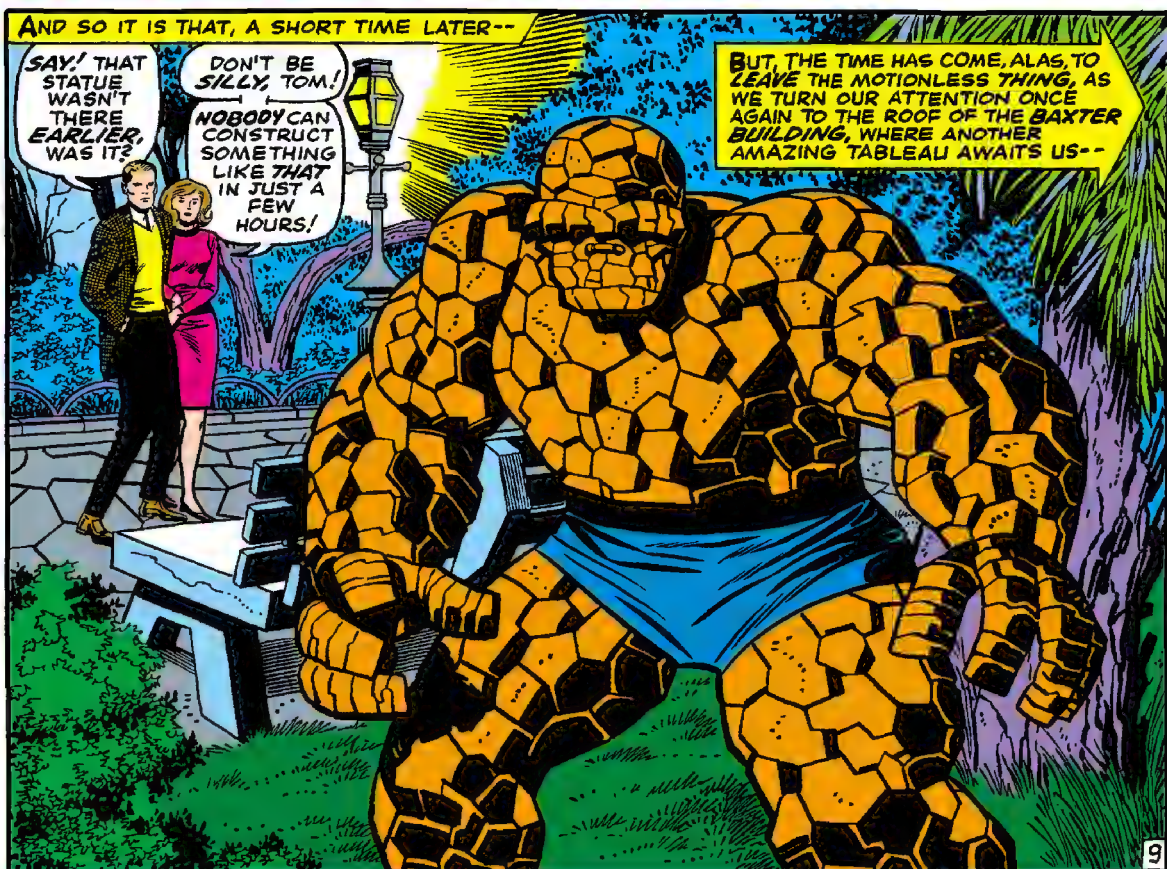
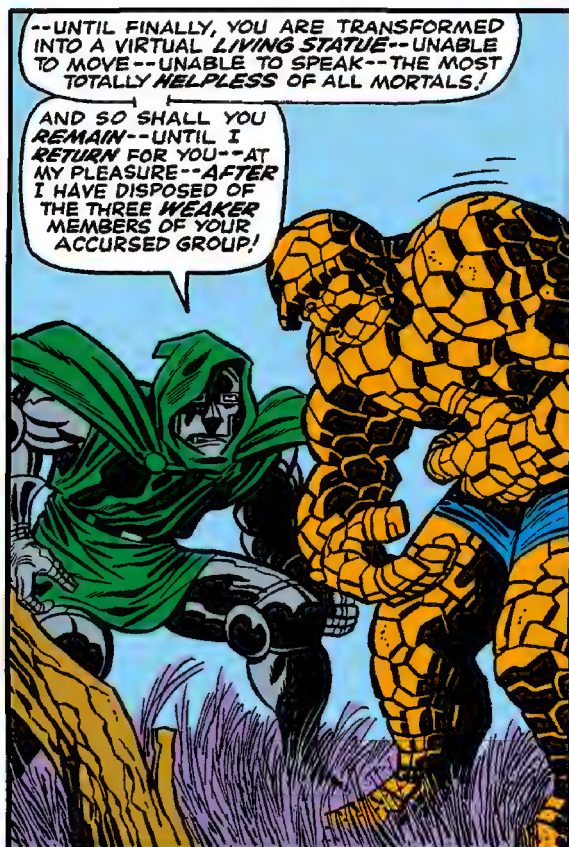
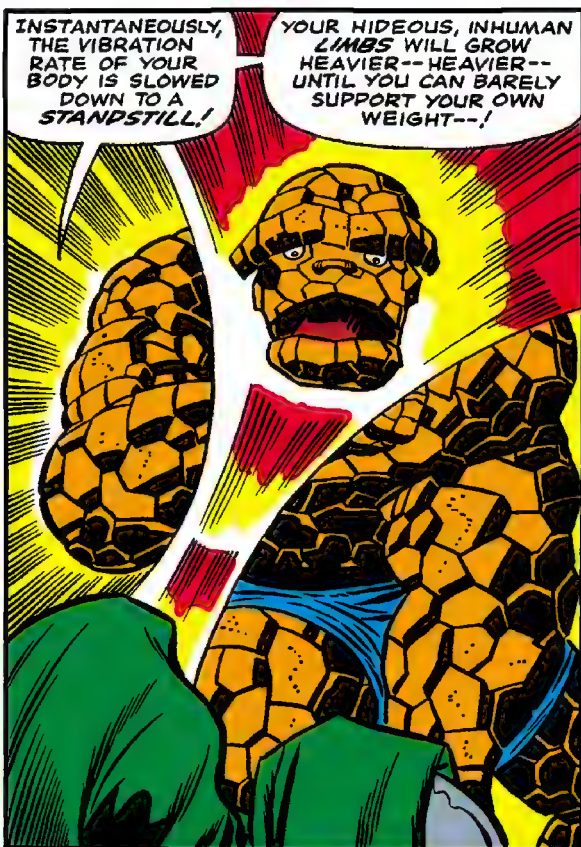


SEE HOW EASILY--
HOW EFFORTLESSLY
--I CAN INCREASE
THE DENSITY OF MY
OWN PHYSICAL
ATOMS--

ENABLING ME TO
SMASH OUT AT YOU
WITH A FORCE THAT
EQUALS YOUR OWN
BRUTAL, SAVAGE
STRENGTH!







WE MADE IT, WYATT! LOCKJAW BROUGHT US BACK TO NEW YORK!

YOUR HOURS OF TRAINING HIM REALLY PAID OFF, BIG FELLA!

YES--AND NOT A MINUTE TOO SOON, JOHNNY.*

*JOHNNY STORM, WYATT WINGFOOT, AND THE OVER-SIZED CANINE KNOWN AS LOCKJAW WERE ABOUT TO BE STOMPED ON BY SOME TYPICAL CRAZY KIRBYESQUE CARNIVORES IN ANOTHER DIMENSION LAST ISH--AS IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW!--SMILEY!

BUT, HOW COME HE BROUGHT US BACK HERE-- INSTEAD OF CLOSER TO OUR GOAL, BEHIND THE NEGATIVE BARRIER?

I DON'T LIKE IT, JOHNNY! LOCKJAW IS GROWLING-- SOMETHING DISTURBS HIM! IT'S A BAD SIGN!

RRRRR

SOMETHING DISTURBS HIM?!!

AFTER ALL THE FALSE LEADS--ALL THE WILD GOOSE CHASES HE'S TAKEN US ON?!!

I'VE GOT A GOOD MIND TO PASTE THAT FOUR-FOOTED FREAK SMACK IN THE SNOUT WITH A FIRE-BALL!

EASY, JOHNNY! LOSING YOUR TEMPER WILL ONLY UNDO ALL WE'VE SOUGHT TO ACCOMPLISH ALL THESE WEEKS!

LOCKJAW IS TRYING TO WARN US--THERE IS DANGER HERE--DANGER WHICH ONLY A HYPER-SENSITIVE BEAST SUCH AS WE CAN DETECT!

PERHAPS IF WE LOOK OVER THE EDGE OF THE ROOF--

JOHNNY! I'VE FOUND SOMETHING!

THE WALL BELOW--SOMETHING HAS TORN A GAPING HOLE RIGHT THRU IT!

THAT'S THE MAIN SECTION OF OUR OPERATIONS UNIT!

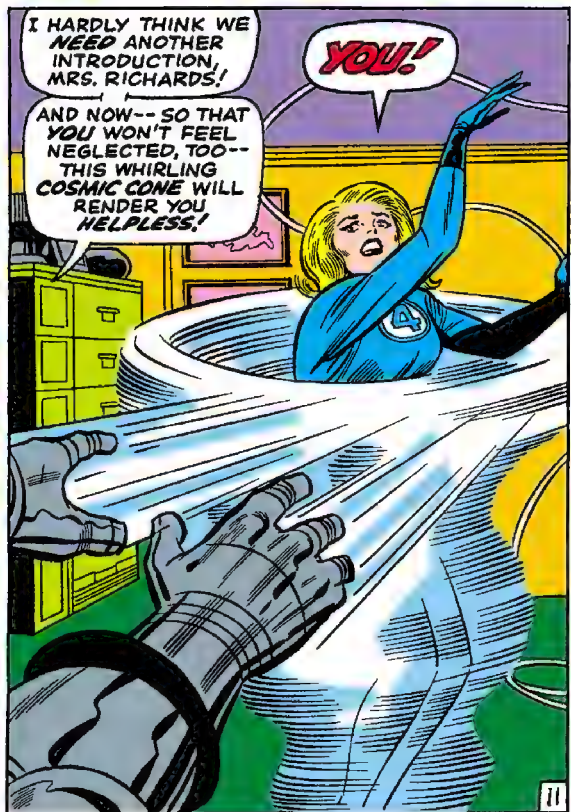
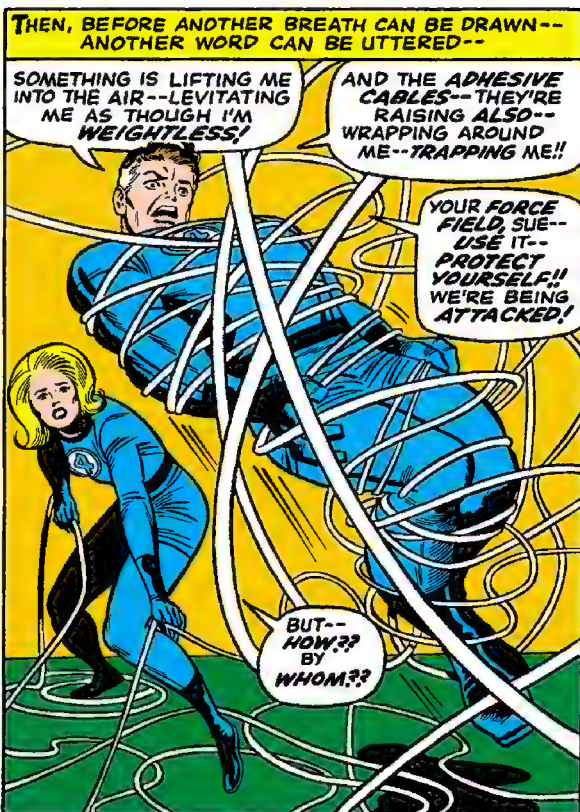
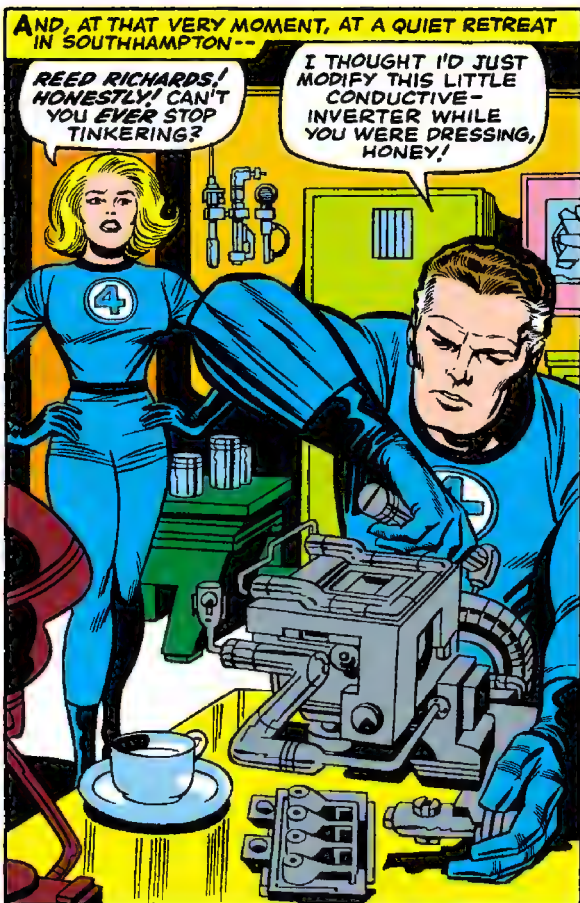
STAND BACK, FELLA! I'M HEADING DOWN THERE--ON THE DOUBLE!

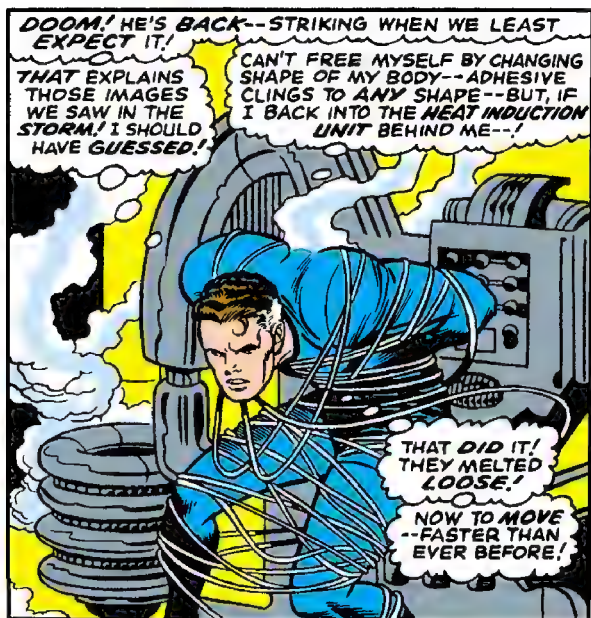
FLAME ON!

WYATT! TAKE THE STAIRS! GET HERE AS SOON AS YOU CAN!

I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT HAPPENED HERE--BUT, I KNOW ONE THING--

IT'S SERIOUS! DEADLY SERIOUS!





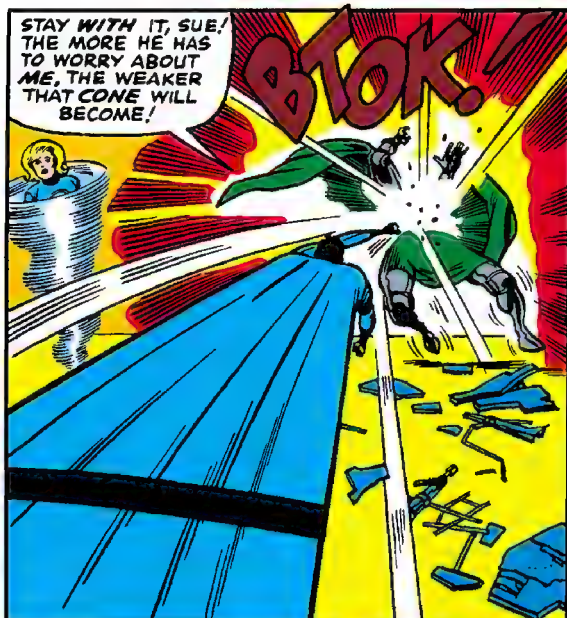
DOOM! HE'S BACK--STRIKING WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT IT!

THAT EXPLAINS THOSE IMAGES WE SAW IN THE STORM! I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED!

CAN'T FREE MYSELF BY CHANGING SHAPE OF MY BODY--ADHESIVE CLINGS TO ANY SHAPE--BUT, IF I BACK INTO THE HEAT INDUCTION UNIT BEHIND ME--!

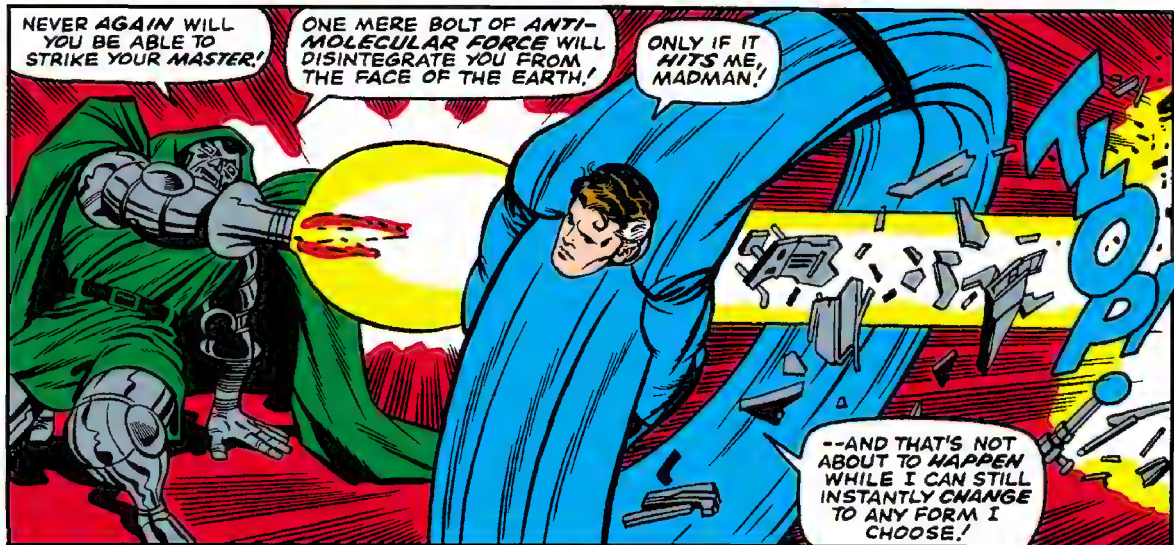
THAT DID IT! THEY MELTED LOOSE!

NOW TO MOVE--FASTER THAN EVER BEFORE!



STAY WITH IT, SUE! THE MORE HE HAS TO WORRY ABOUT ME, THE WEAKER THAT CONE WILL BECOME!

BLOK!



NEVER AGAIN WILL YOU BE ABLE TO STRIKE YOUR MASTER!

ONE MERE BOLT OF ANTI-MOLECULAR FORCE WILL DISINTEGRATE YOU FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!

ONLY IF IT HITS ME, MADMAN!

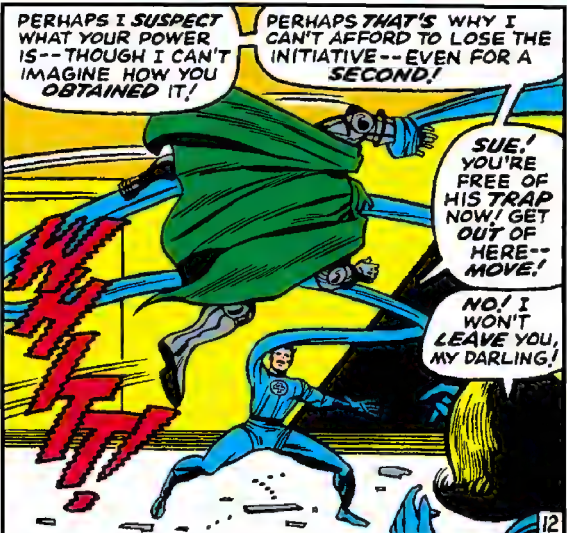
--AND THAT'S NOT ABOUT TO HAPPEN WHILE I CAN STILL INSTANTLY CHANGE TO ANY FORM I CHOOSE!



IT'S TIME YOU LEARNED THAT DESTRUCTIVE POWER ALONE CAN'T ALWAYS GUARANTEE A VICTORY!

THE GREATEST WEAPON OF ALL IS A MAN'S BRAIN--AND THE GREATEST DEFENSE IS HIS REFUSAL TO SURRENDER!

I AM POSSESSED OF POWER WHICH DEFIES DESCRIPTION--AND YET YOU DARE LECTURE TO ME?!!

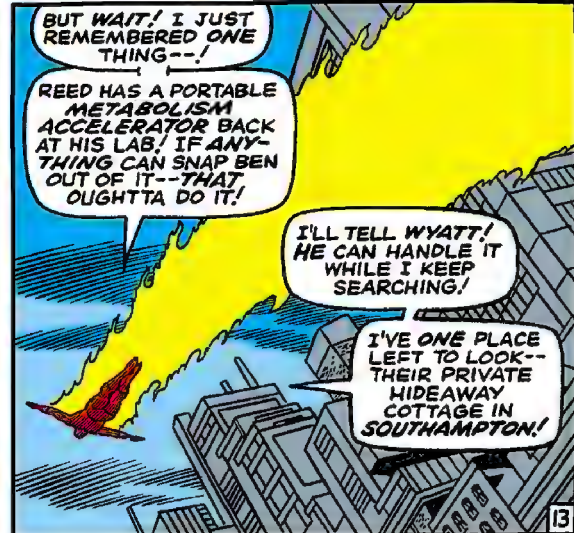
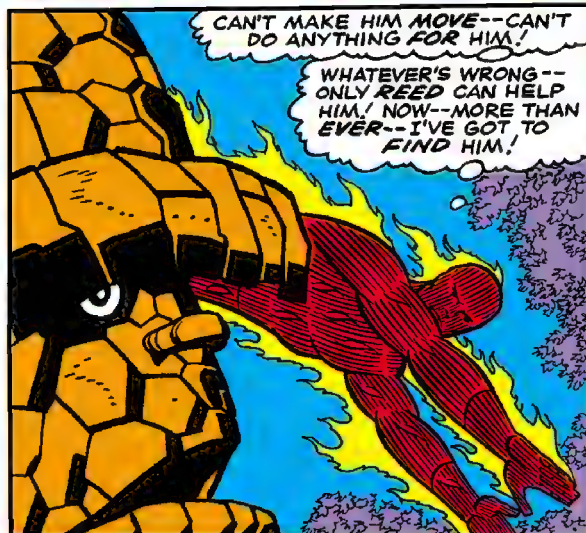
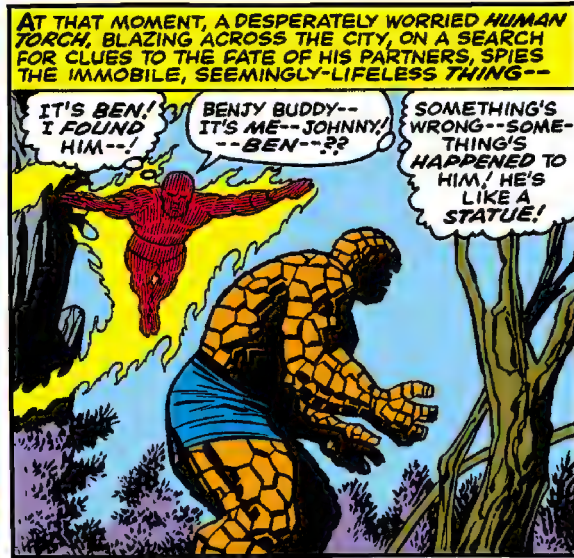
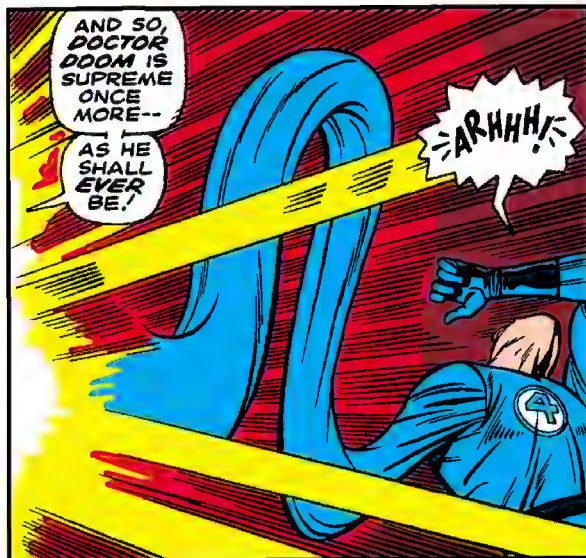
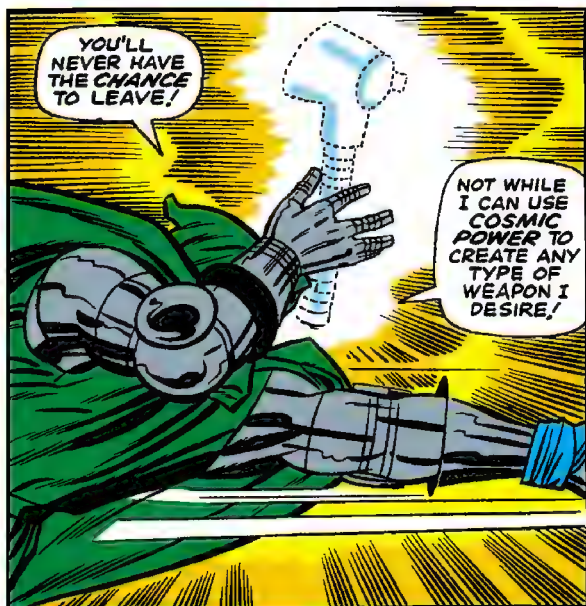


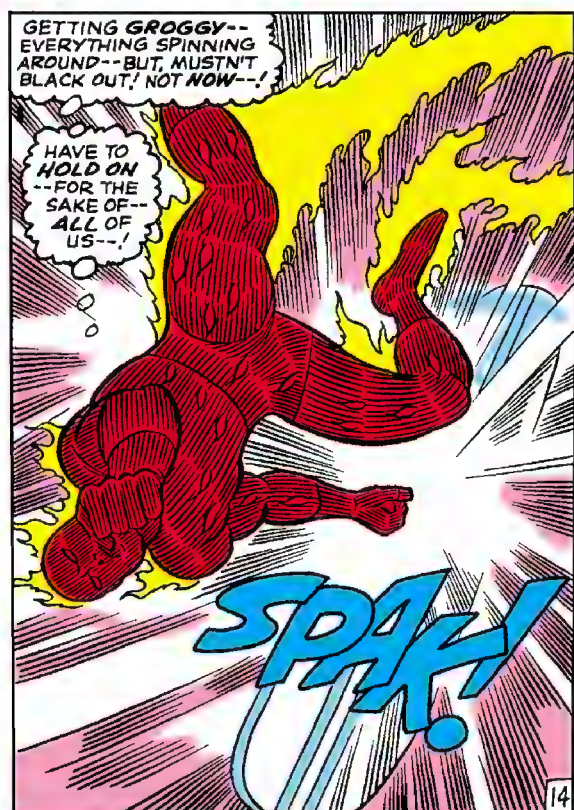
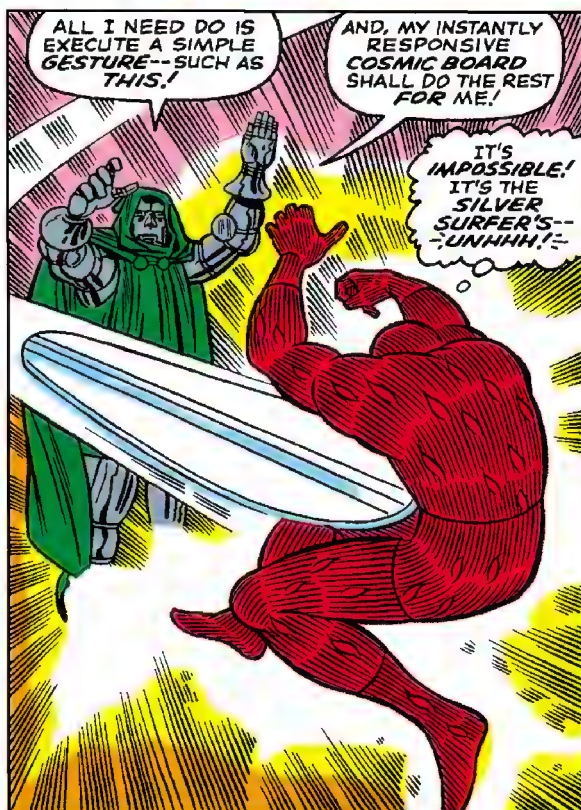
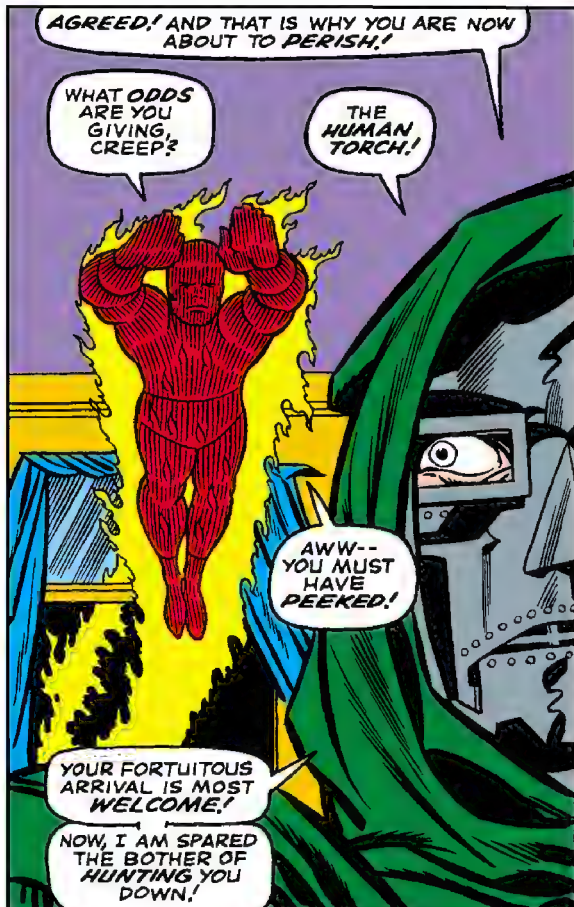
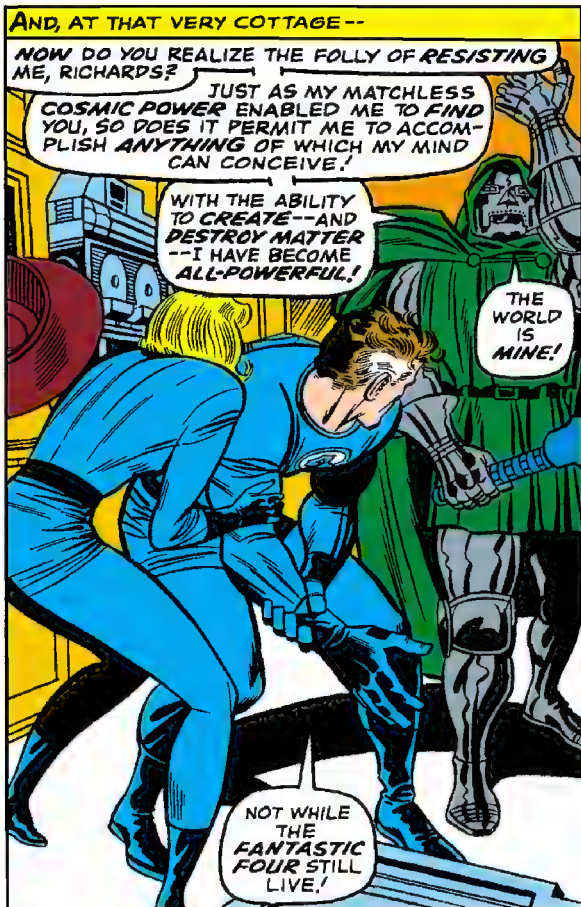
PERHAPS I SUSPECT WHAT YOUR POWER IS--THOUGH I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW YOU OBTAINED IT!

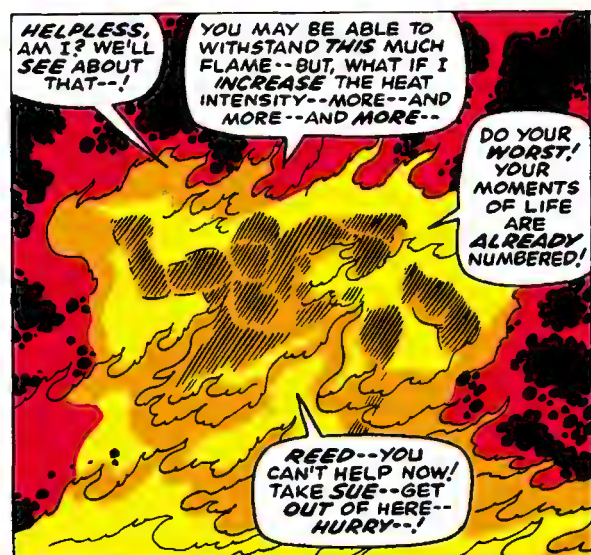
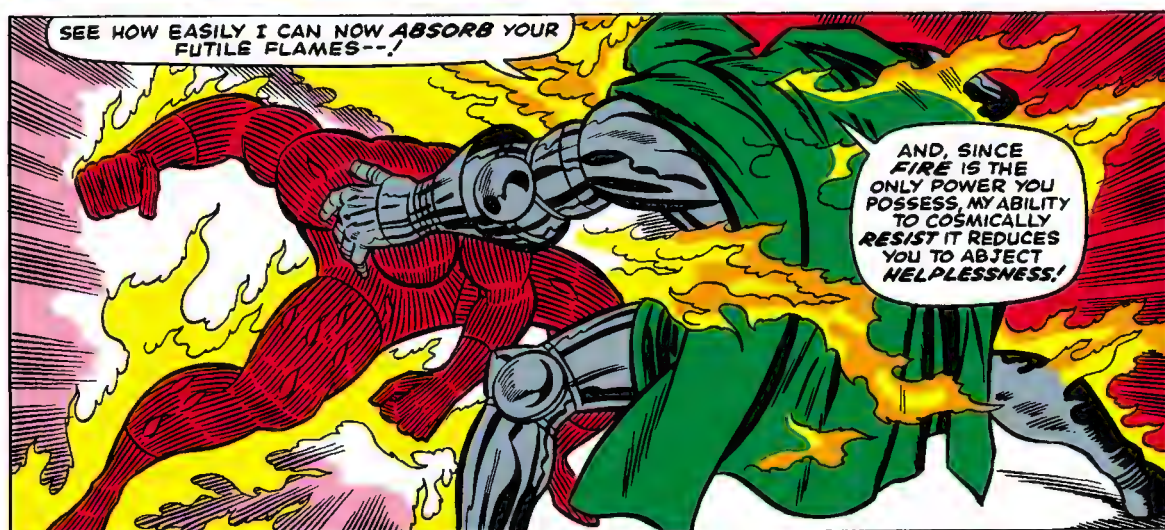
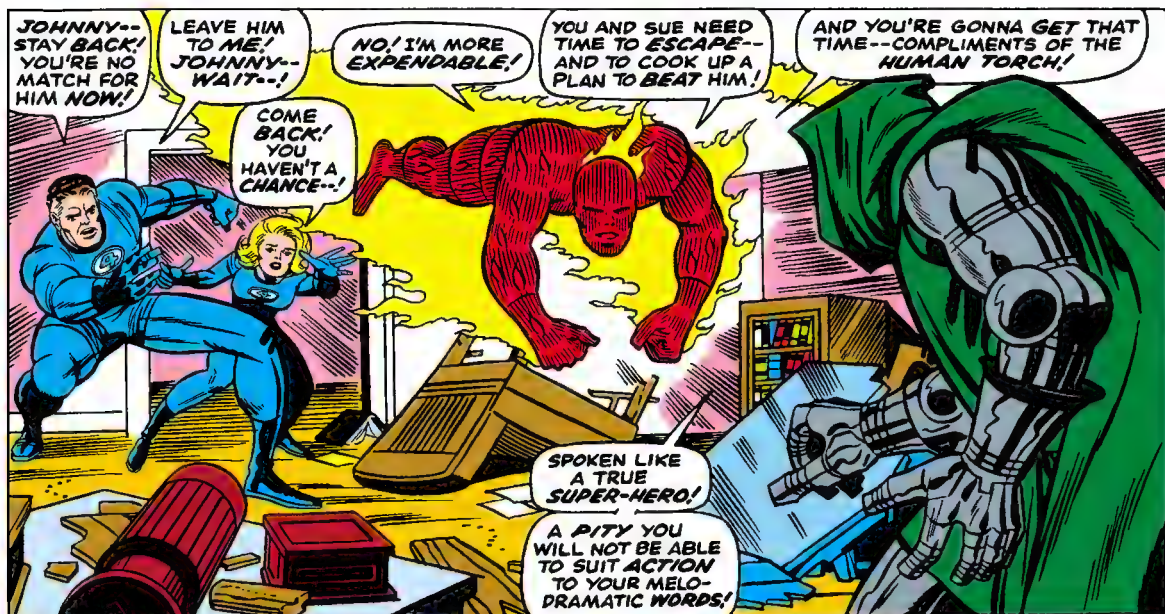
PERHAPS THAT'S WHY I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE THE INITIATIVE--EVEN FOR A SECOND!

SUE! YOU'RE FREE OF HIS TRAP NOW! GET OUT OF HERE--MOVE!

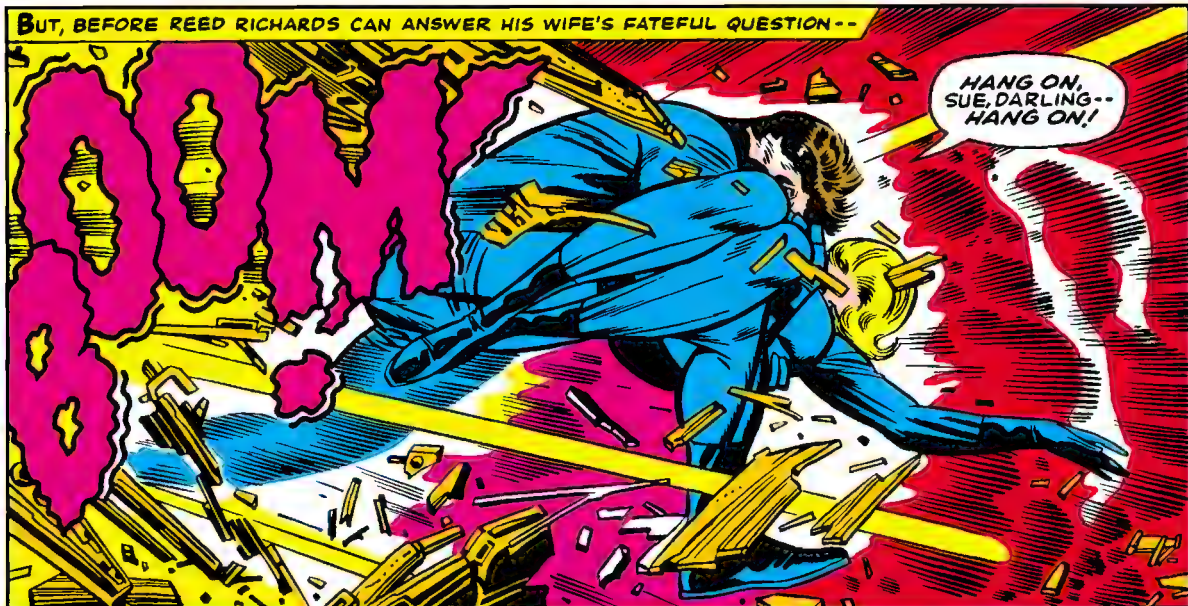
NO! I WON'T LEAVE YOU, MY DARLING!





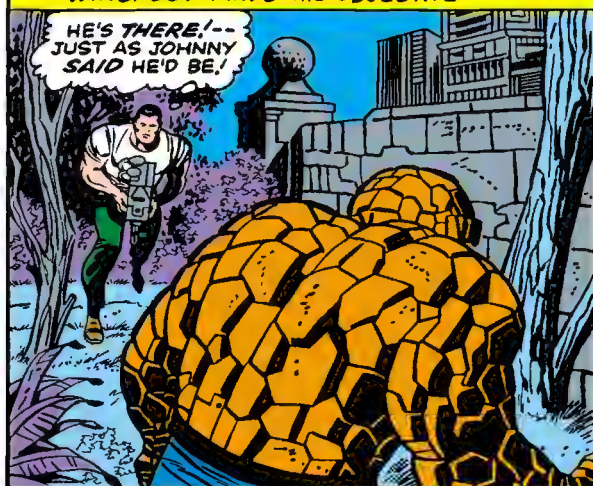


BUT, BEFORE REED RICHARDS CAN ANSWER HIS WIFE'S FATEFUL QUESTION --



HANG ON,
SUE, DARLING--
HANG ON!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN CENTRAL PARK, WYATT WINGFOOT FINDS HIS OBJECTIVE--

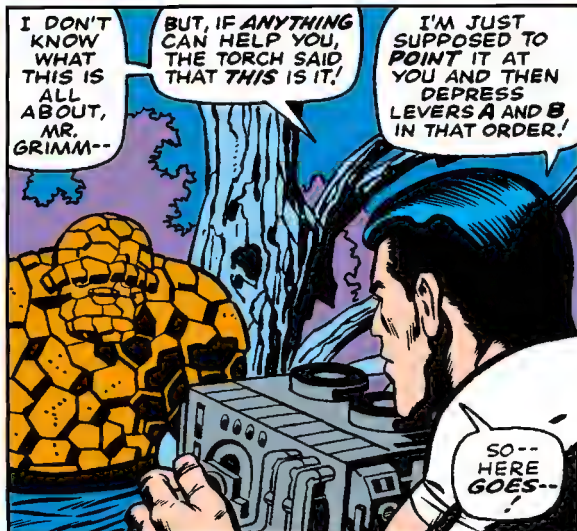


HE'S THERE!--
JUST AS JOHNNY
SAID HE'D BE!

I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
THIS IS
ALL
ABOUT,
MR.
GRIMM--

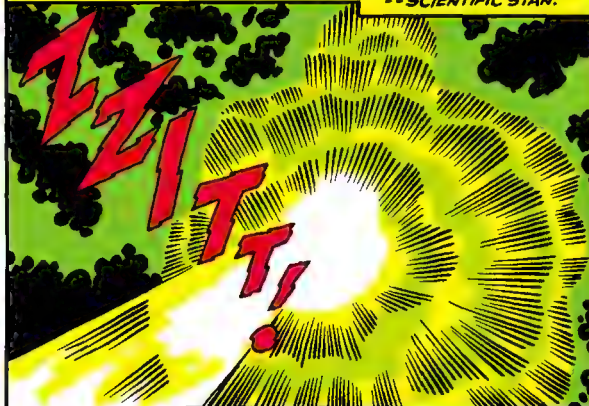
BUT, IF ANYTHING
CAN HELP YOU,
THE TORCH SAID
THAT THIS IS IT!

I'M JUST
SUPPOSED TO
POINT IT AT
YOU AND THEN
DEPRESS
LEVERS A AND B
IN THAT ORDER!



SO--
HERE
GOES--

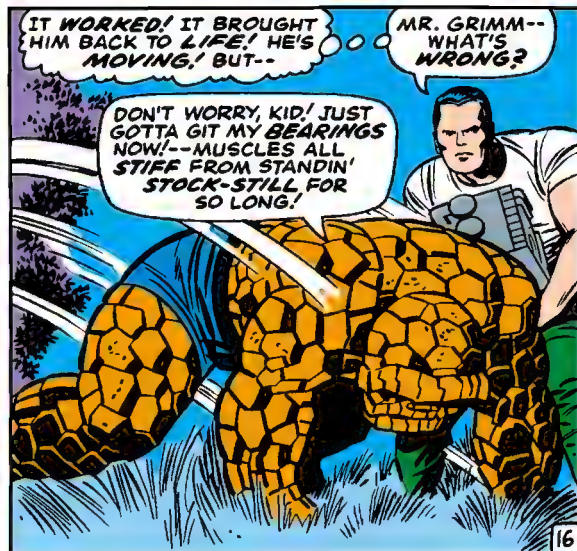
SPECIAL NOTE TO MOLECULE BUFFS: THOUGH NO ONE BUT REED RICHARDS FULLY UNDERSTANDS ITS DETAILED OPERATION, THE POTENT METABOLISM ACCELERATOR ACTUALLY SPEEDS UP THE VIBRATION RATE OF THE THING'S MOLECULES, WHICH DOOM'S DEADLY POWER HAD INCREDIBLY SLOWED DOWN! (AT LEAST, THAT'S HOW JACK DESCRIBED IT TO US!)
-- SCIENTIFIC STAN.



IT WORKED! IT BROUGHT
HIM BACK TO LIFE! HE'S
MOVING! BUT--

MR. GRIMM--
WHAT'S
WRONG?

DON'T WORRY, KID! JUST
GOTTA GIT MY BEARINGS
NOW!--MUSCLES ALL
STIFF FROM STANDIN'
STOCK-STILL FOR
SO LONG!



WHILE, BACK AT THE SMOLDERING COTTAGE IN SOUTHAMPTON ONCE AGAIN--

NOW DO YOU REALIZE HOW USELESS YOUR PUNY EFFORTS ARE?

HOW CAN YOUR MEAGER FLAME AFFECT ONE WHO POSSESSES THE POWER TO SURVIVE THE AWESOME EXTREMES OF HEAT AND OF COLD IN OUTER SPACE?!!

THEN I GUESSED RIGHT! YOU DO HAVE THE POWER OF THE SILVER SURFER!

BUT, HOW? HOW DID YOU GET IT--??

THAT CANNOT MATTER TO YOU NOW!

--NOW THAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE DESTROYED!

OF WHAT USE IS YOUR BLAZING BODY, WHEN I AM ABLE TO CREATE A COSMIC DROP IN TEMPERATURE--OBLITERATING YOUR FLAME WITH A FAR MORE POTENT FROST!

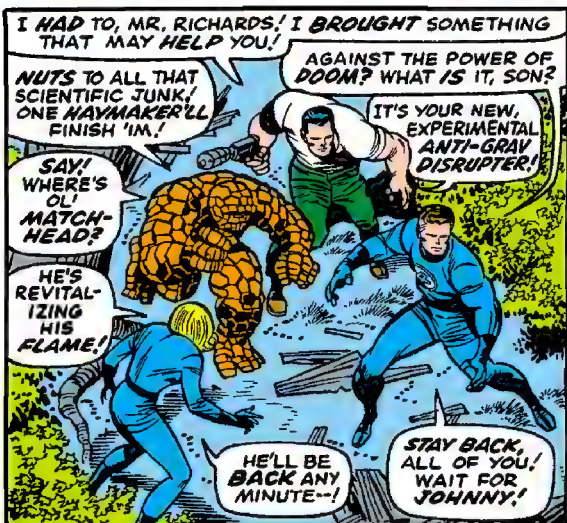
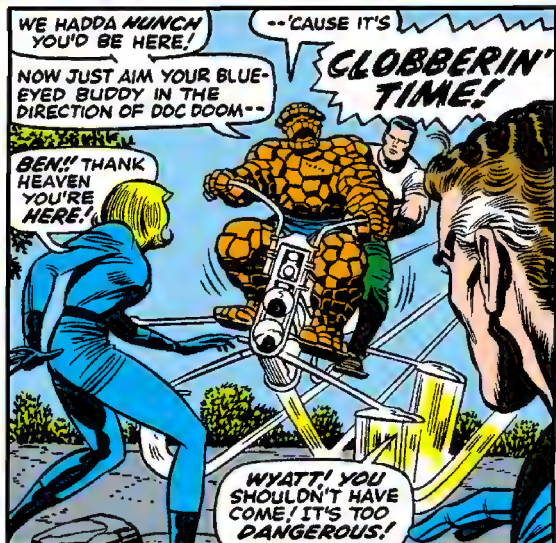
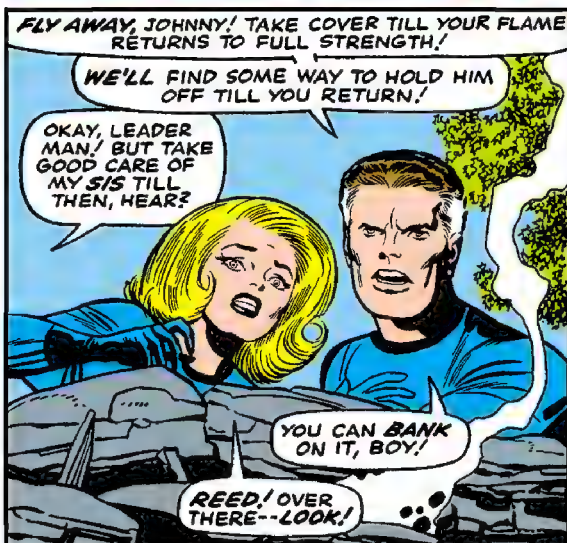
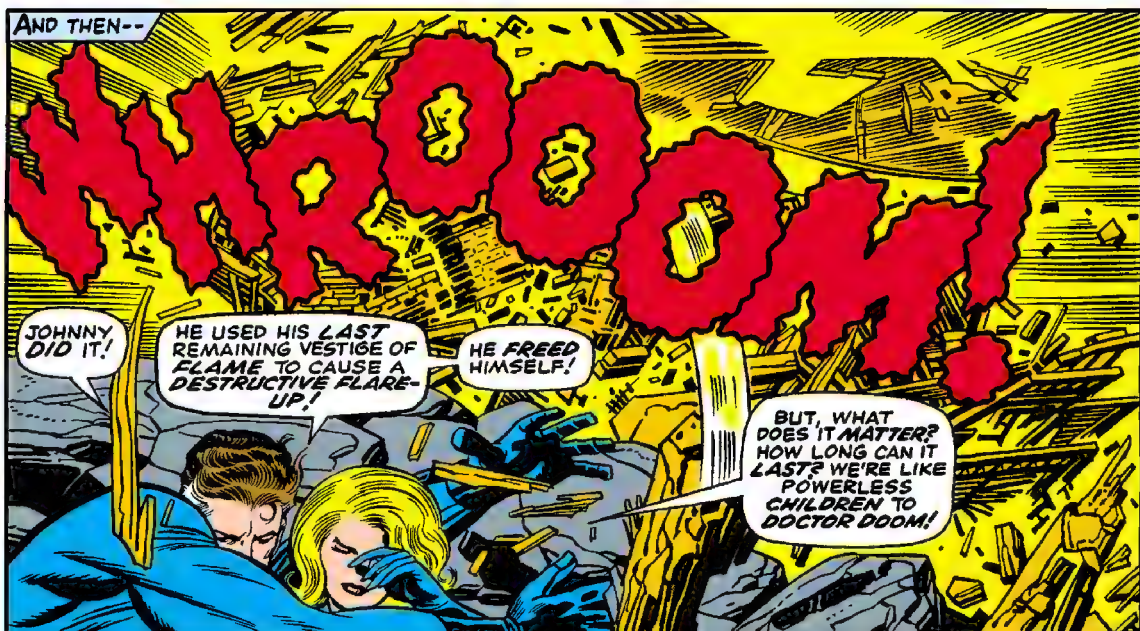
THE FAMOUS HUMAN TORCH--HAH! YOU ARE NO MORE THAN A TRAPPED, TERRIFIED TEEN-AGER, OVERWHELMED BY A FORCE YOU CANNOT EVEN COMPREHEND!

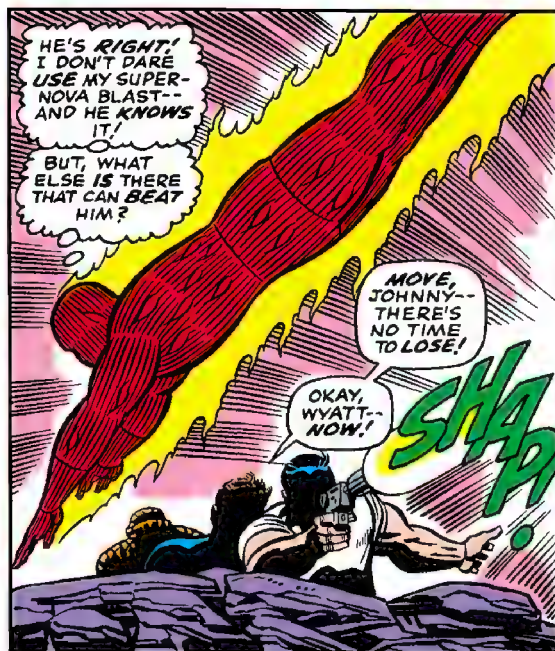
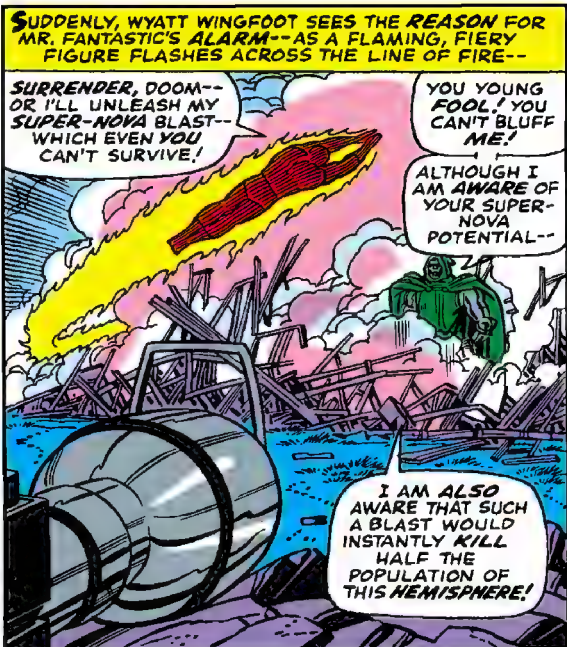
INDEED, SHORN OF YOUR OVER-RATED FLAME, YOU ARE VIRTUALLY BENEATH MY NOTICE!

I WOULD NO MORE WASTE MY COSMIC POWER ON YOU THAN I WOULD USE A CANNON TO SLAY A FLEA!

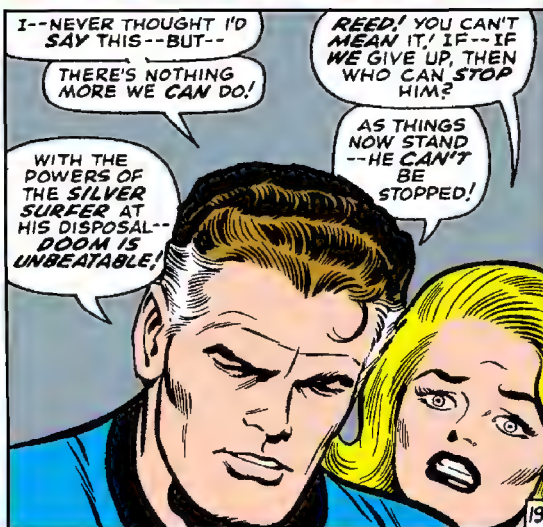
I'M NOT BEATEN YET! ONE FINAL SURGE OF HEAT... IT'S ALL I NEED...

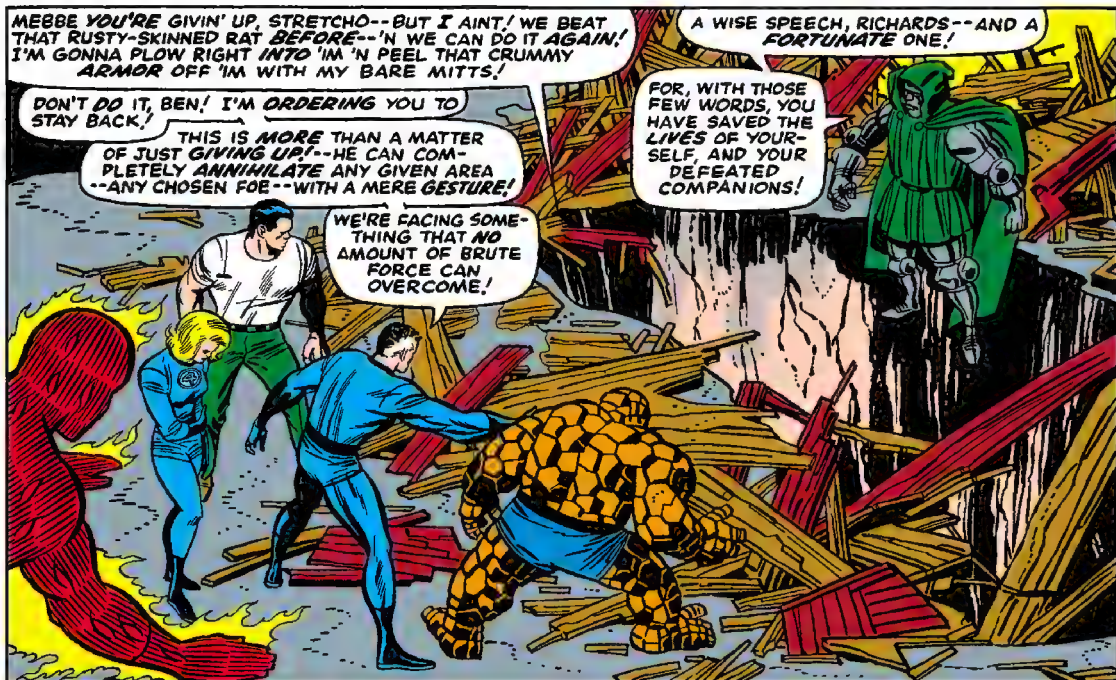
I'VE GOT TO DO IT! I'VE GOT TO--





INSTANTANEOUSLY, WHEN THE BEAM FROM REED RICHARD'S ANTI-GRAV DISRUPTER STRIKES THE AREA UPON WHICH DR. DOOM IS STANDING, THE NATURAL FORCE OF GRAVITY ITSELF IS CANCELLED OUT WITHIN A HUNDRED-FOOT RADIUS, AS THE VERY ROCKS FROM THE GROUND BELOW FLY UPWARD IN A MAD, THUNDEROUS UPHEAVAL!!!





MEBBE YOU'RE GIVIN' UP, STRETCHO-- BUT I AINT! WE BEAT THAT RUSTY-SKINNED RAT BEFORE--'N WE CAN DO IT AGAIN! I'M GONNA PLOW RIGHT INTO 'IM 'N PEEL THAT CRUMMY ARMOR OFF 'IM WITH MY BARE MITTS!

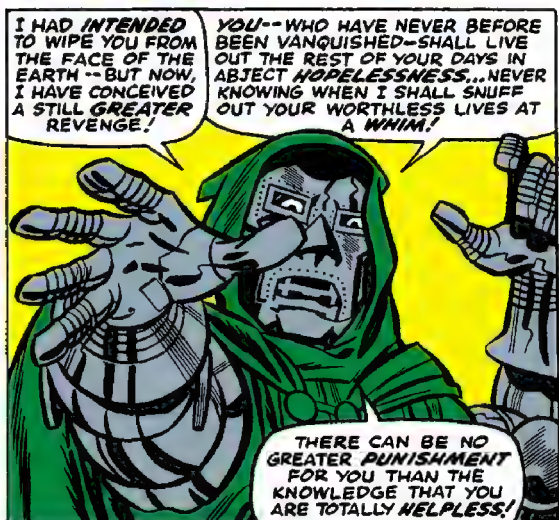
DON'T DO IT, BEN! I'M ORDERING YOU TO STAY BACK!

THIS IS MORE THAN A MATTER OF JUST GIVING UP!--HE CAN COMPLETELY ANNIHILATE ANY GIVEN AREA--ANY CHOSEN FOE--WITH A MERE GESTURE!

A WISE SPEECH, RICHARDS-- AND A FORTUNATE ONE!

FOR, WITH THOSE FEW WORDS, YOU HAVE SAVED THE LIVES OF YOURSELF, AND YOUR DEFEATED COMPANIONS!

WE'RE FACING SOMETHING THAT NO AMOUNT OF BRUTE FORCE CAN OVERCOME!



I HAD INTENDED TO WIPE YOU FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH -- BUT NOW, I HAVE CONCEIVED A STILL GREATER REVENGE!

YOU-- WHO HAVE NEVER BEFORE BEEN VANQUISHED-- SHALL LIVE OUT THE REST OF YOUR DAYS IN ABJECT HOPELESSNESS... NEVER KNOWING WHEN I SHALL SNUFF OUT YOUR WORTHLESS LIVES AT A WHIM!

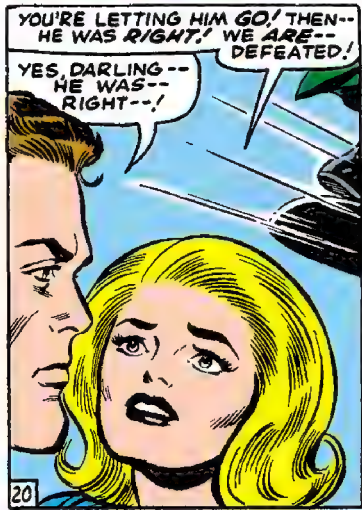
THERE CAN BE NO GREATER PUNISHMENT FOR YOU THAN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU ARE TOTALLY HELPLESS!



LET THIS BE THE FINAL THOUGHT I LEAVE YOU WITH--

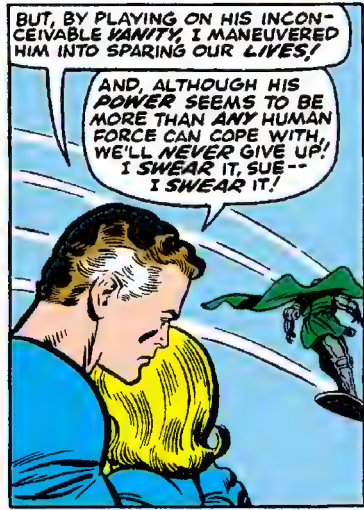
SO THOROUGHLY DEFEATED ARE YOU-- SO POWERLESS TO AFFECT ME IN ANY WAY THAT YOU NO LONGER MATTER!

YOU ARE NOT EVEN IMPORTANT ENOUGH FOR ME TO DESTROY!



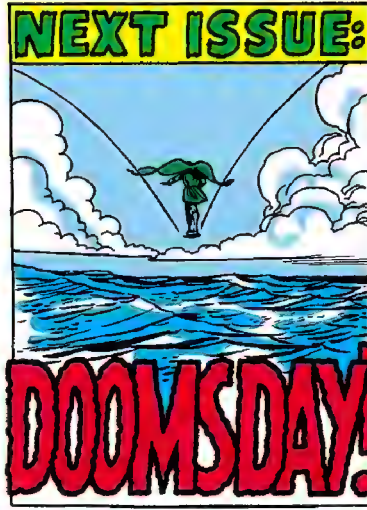
YOU'RE LETTING HIM GO, THEN-- HE WAS RIGHT! WE ARE-- DEFEATED!

YES, DARLING-- HE WAS-- RIGHT--!



BUT, BY PLAYING ON HIS INCONCEIVABLE VANITY, I MANEUVERED HIM INTO SPARING OUR LIVES!

AND, ALTHOUGH HIS POWER SEEMS TO BE MORE THAN ANY HUMAN FORCE CAN COPE WITH, WE'LL NEVER GIVE UP! I SWEAR IT, SUE-- I SWEAR IT!



NEXT ISSUE:

DOOMSDAY!



**MARVEL
COMICS
GROUP**

12¢ 59
IND. FEB

THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMIC MAGAZINE!

Fantastic Four

APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

IN THIS EARTH-SHAKING ISSUE:
"The INHUMANS
BREAK FREE!"



"DOOMSDAY!"

THE FABULOUS **F.F.** COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH--

DOOMSDAY

AFTER THEIR STAGGERING DEFEAT BY DOCTOR DOOM, LAST ISSUE, THE WORLD'S GREATEST SUPER-TEAM SWALLOWS ITS PRIDE AS RED RICHARDS BROADCASTS A GRIM WARNING TO MANKIND--

THE TIME HAS COME FOR EVERY NATION--EVERY HOSTILE BLOC-- TO PUT ASIDE PETTY DIFFERENCES AND **UNITE** AGAINST A COMMON ENEMY--PERHAPS THE MOST DEADLY ENEMY WHICH CIVILIZED MAN HAS EVER FACED!

OH, BEN-- WHAT GOOD CAN ALL THIS DO? HOW CAN ANYTHING STOP DOOM--NOW THAT HE POSSESSES THE POWER OF THE SILVER SURFER?

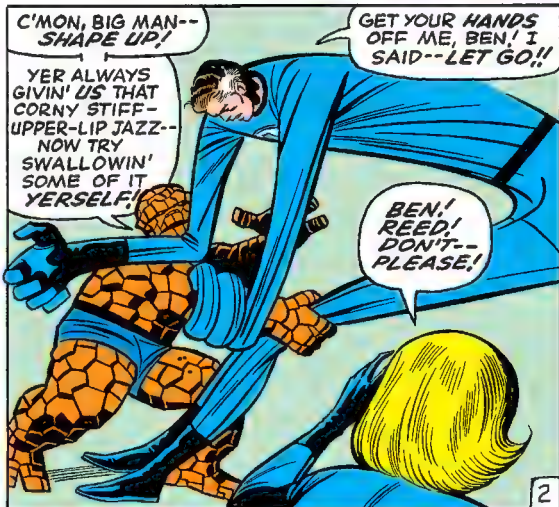
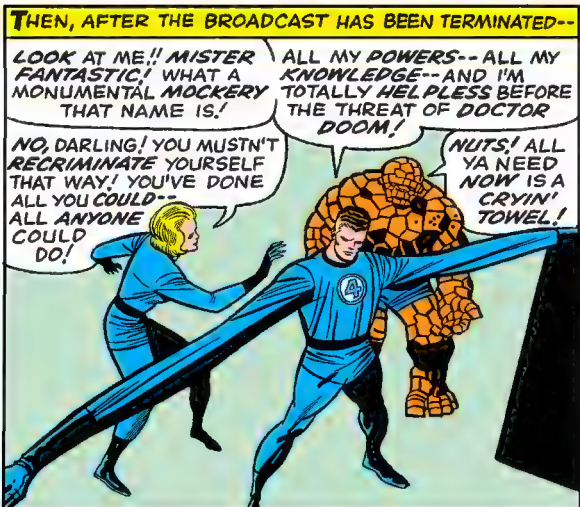
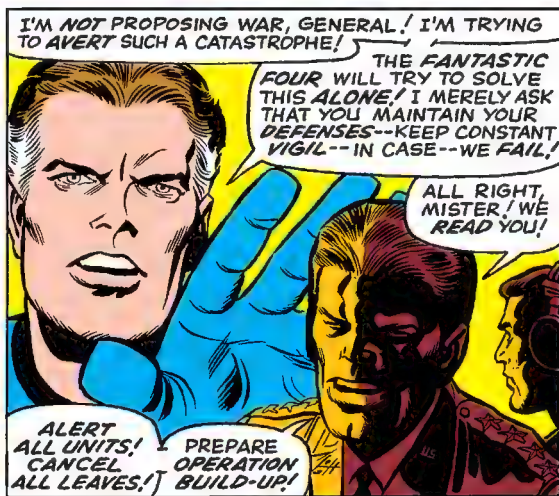
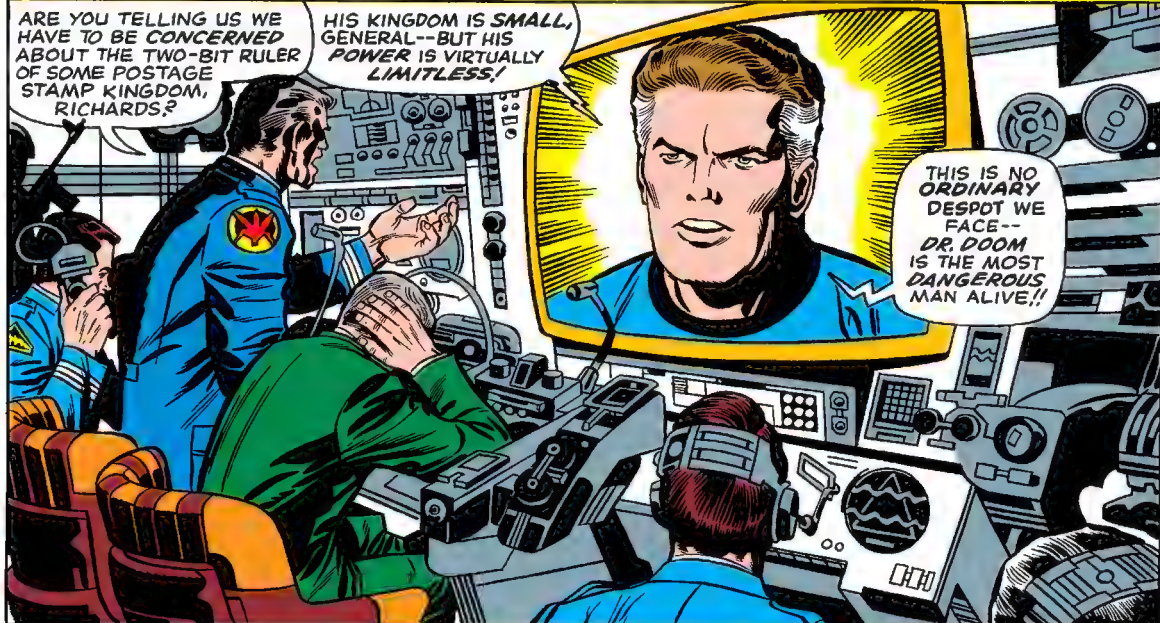
I DUNNO, SUSIE GAL--BUT, LIKE OL' STRETCHO WOULD SAY--AS LONG AS A GUY STILL HAS A BRAIN--AND SOME BACKBONE--HE AINT NEVER BEATEN 'LESS HE WANTS'A BE!

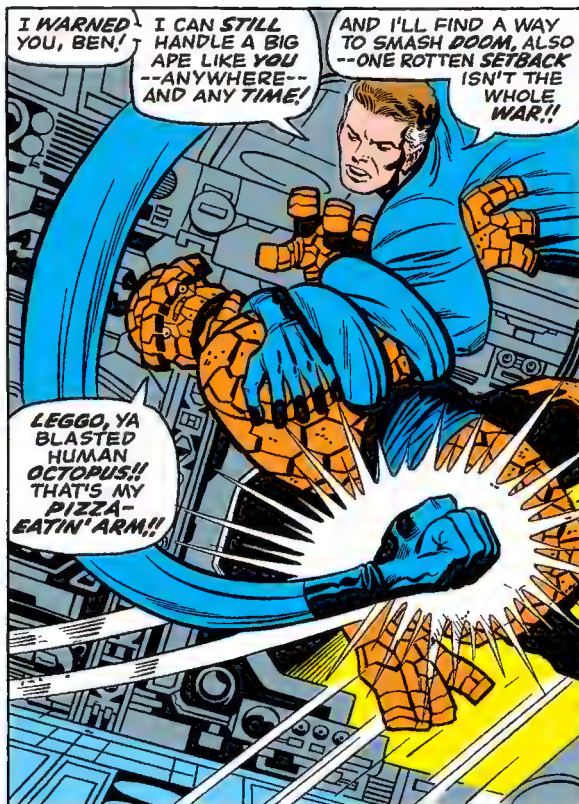
BUT, IT'S GONNA TAKE A LOT MORE'N THAT TO GIT US OUTTA THIS MESS!

A
STAN LEE ★ **JACK KIRBY**
MODERN DAY
MASTERWORK!

DELINEATION BY:
JOE SINNOTT
LETTERING BY:
ARTIE SIMEK

MOMENTS LATER, AFTER HIS WORLD-WIDE PUBLIC ADDRESS; THE SLEEPLESS, HAGGARD MR. FANTASTIC ENGAGES IN A CLOSED-CIRCUIT HIGH-POLICY DIALOGUE WITH THE ALLIED CHIEFS-OF-STAFF--





I WARNED YOU, BEN!

I CAN STILL HANDLE A BIG APE LIKE YOU--ANYWHERE--AND ANY TIME!

AND I'LL FIND A WAY TO SMASH DOOM, ALSO--ONE ROTTEN SETBACK ISN'T THE WHOLE WAR!!

LEGGO, YA BLASTED HUMAN OCTOPUS!! THAT'S MY PIZZA-EATIN' ARM!!



I'LL BE IN MY LAB--AND I DON'T WANT TO BE DISTURBED FOR ANYTHING--DO YOU HEAR?? NOT FOR ANYTHING!!

BENJAMIN J. GRIMM, YOU BLUE-EYED BLUFFER! YOU DID THAT PURPOSELY--TO MAKE HIM ANGRY--TO MAKE HIM FIGHT BACK!

AND--IT WORKED!

YEAH! YEAH! I'M A REGULAR HELPFUL HANNAH!



Y'KNOW SOMETHIN', SUSIE? THAT EGG-HEADED HUSBAND OF YOURS MAY BE THE CHAMPION CORNBALL OF ALL TIME--AND AS SQUARE AS A KIDIE'S BUILDIN' BLOCK--

BUT, I FIGGER HE'S THE MOST MAN I EVER MET UP WITH, LADY! AND ONCE HE GETS DONE FIGGERIN' IT'S ALWAYS HIS FAULT WHEN THE F.F. TAKES A NOSEDIVE, HE'LL FIND US SOME WAY TO CLOBBER DOOM--IF THERE IS ANY WAY--!

THAT'S JUST IT, BEN! WHAT IF THERE IS NO WAY?

HOW CAN ANY INDIVIDUAL--OR EVEN ANY SUPER-TEAM, LIKE OURSELVES, STAND UP TO A MAN WHO HAS THE POWER OF COSMIC ENERGY AT HIS COMMAND??

I--WUZ KINDA HOPIN'--YA WOULDN'T ASK THAT!

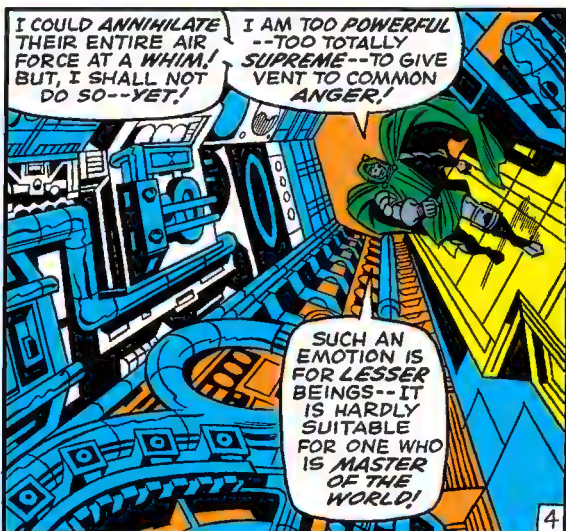
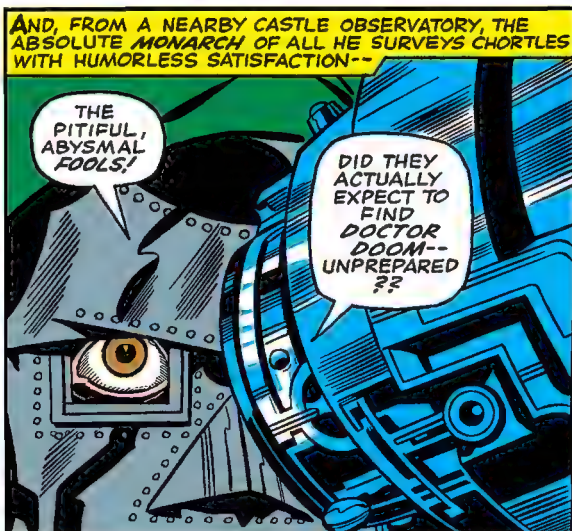
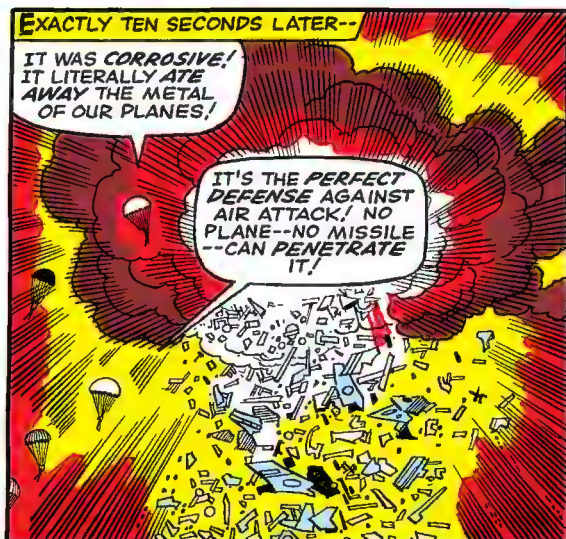
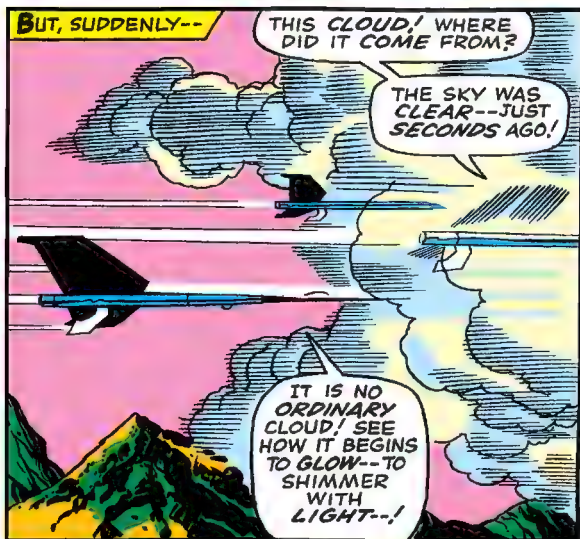
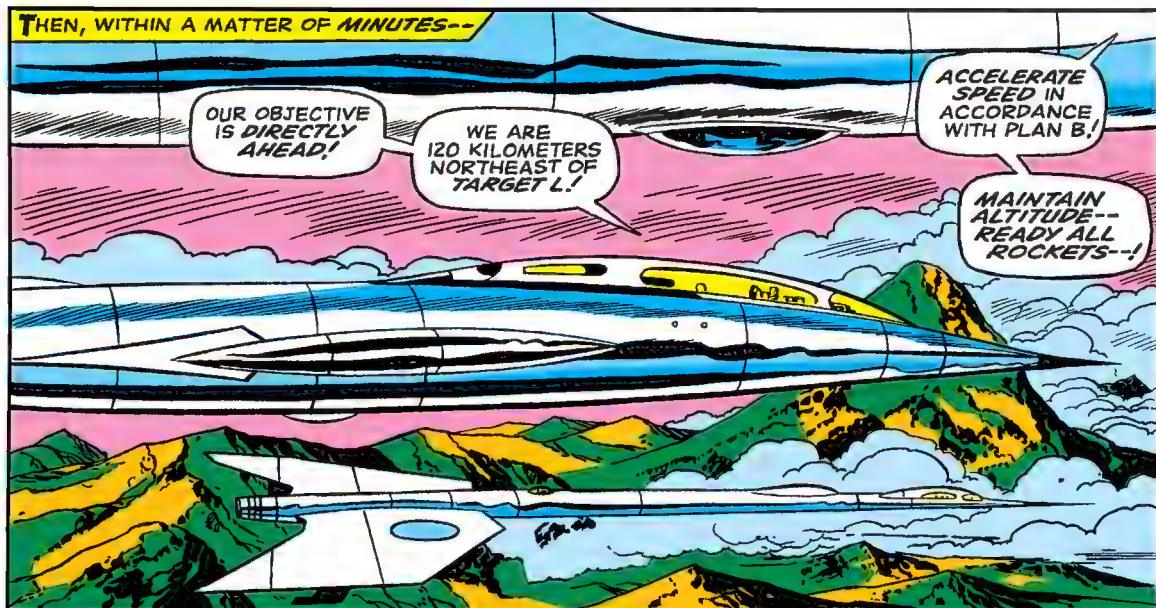


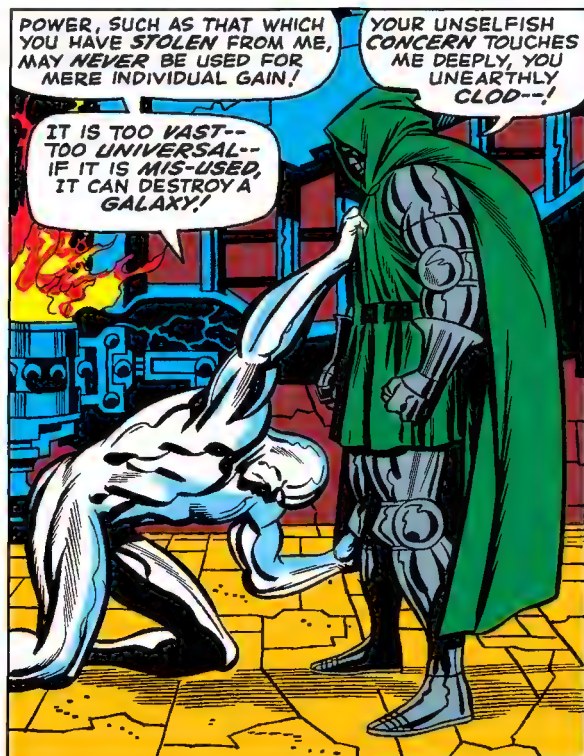
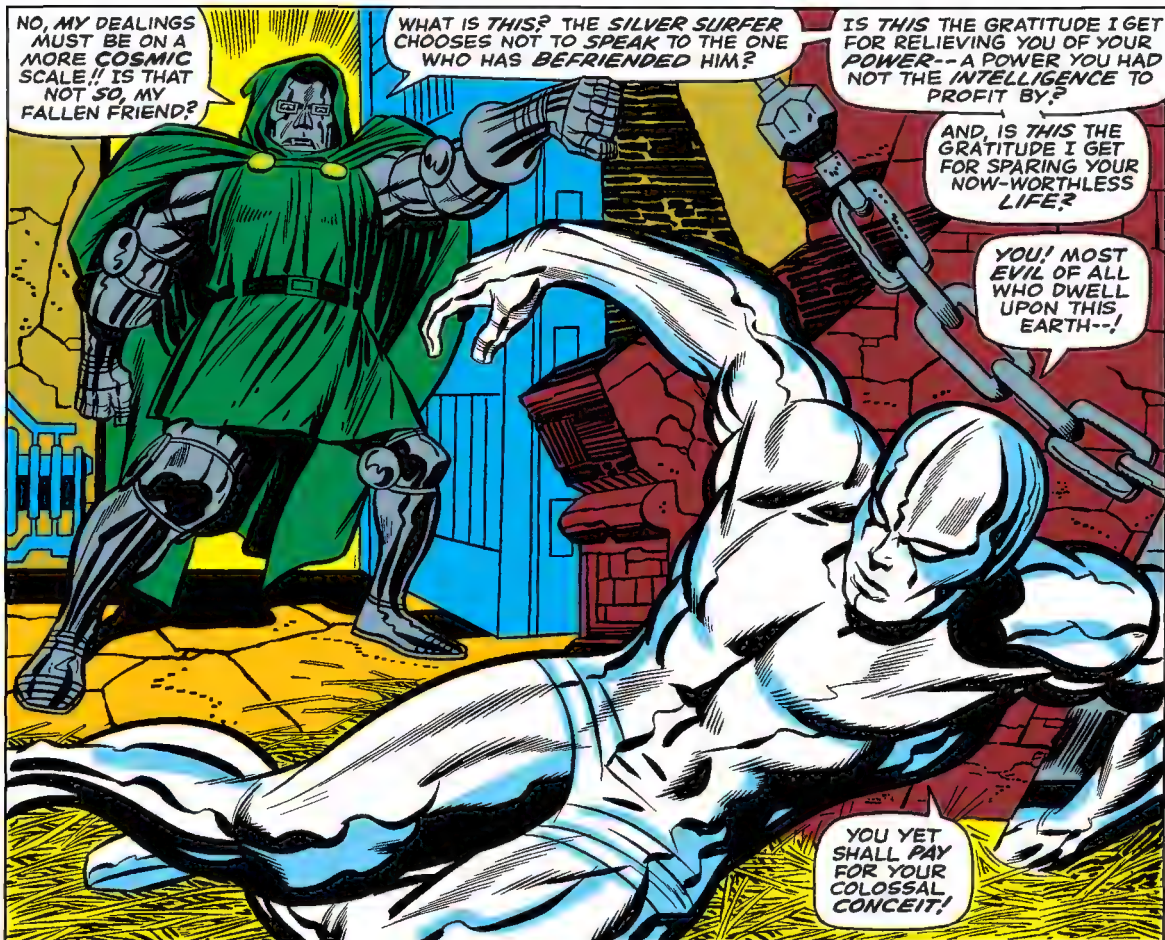
MEANWHILE, A SHORT TIME AFTER REED'S WORLD-WIDE TELECAST, A FLIGHT OF SUPER-SONIC BOMBERS TAKES OFF ON A DEADLY MISSION--THEIR DESTINATION--THE FORTIFIED KINGDOM OF LATVERIA!

SHOOOK!

IF DOCTOR DOOM IS TRULY THE MENACE AMERICA HAS CLAIMED HE IS, THEN HE MUST BE INSTANTLY CRUSHED!

AND, WHAT A MAGNIFICENT PROPAGANDA VICTORY IT SHALL BE FOR US WHEN THE WORLD SEES THAT WE WERE THE ONES TO DESTROY HIM!







IT AILED
YOU
NOTHING--

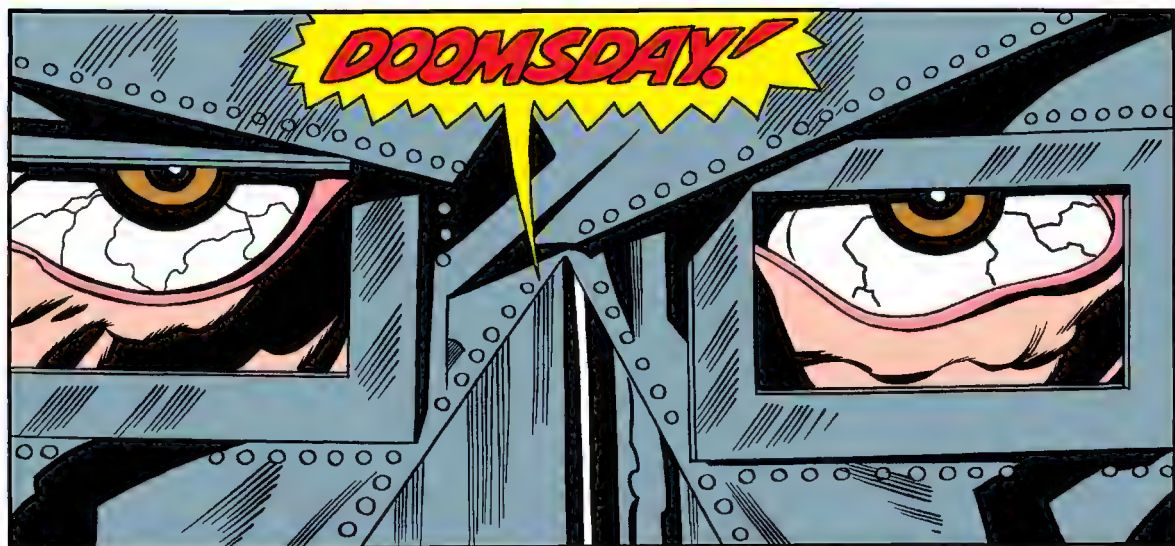
BUT, IN MY HANDS, THIS
MATCHLESS, ALL-ENCOM-
PASSING *COSMIC POWER*
SHALL ENSLAVE AN ENTIRE
PLANET--AND, AFTER THAT--
PERHAPS A *UNIVERSE*,
AS WELL!

NEVER!
IT WILL
NOT BE--
IT *MUST*
NOT
BE--!

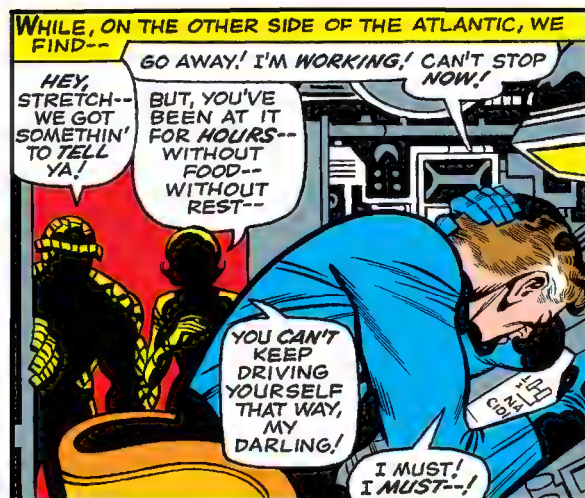


BAH! I HAVE
TARRIED WITH
YOU LONG
ENOUGH!

MY GREATEST
TASK NOW LIES
BEFORE ME!!
I MUST PREPARE
A HELPLESS
HUMANITY FOR
THE COMING
OF--



DOOMSDAY!



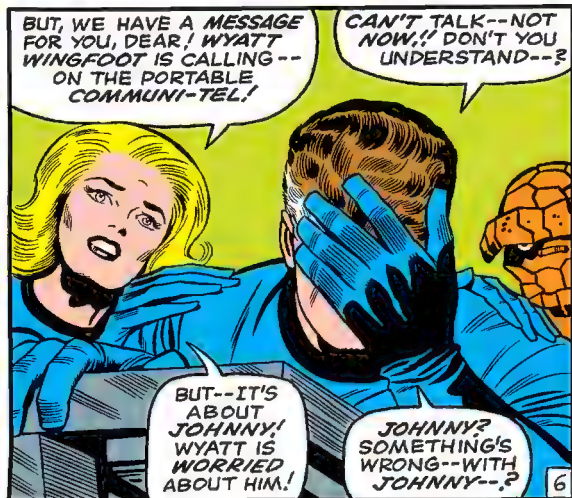
WHILE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC, WE
FIND--

HEY,
STRETCH--
WE GOT
SOMETHIN'
TO TELL
YA!

GO AWAY! I'M WORKING! CAN'T STOP
NOW!
BUT, YOU'VE
BEEN AT IT
FOR HOURS--
WITHOUT
FOOD--
WITHOUT
REST--

YOU CAN'T
KEEP
DRIVING
YOURSELF
THAT WAY,
MY
DARLING!

I MUST!
I *MUST*--!

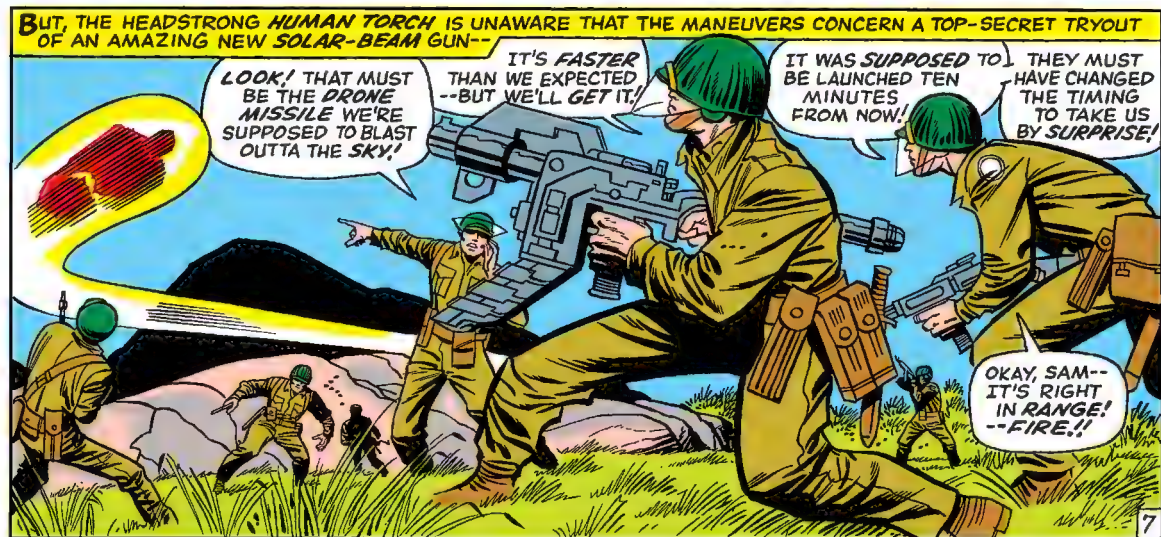
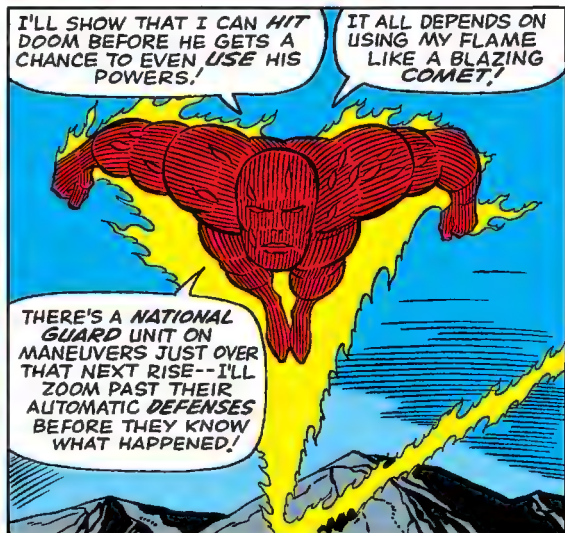
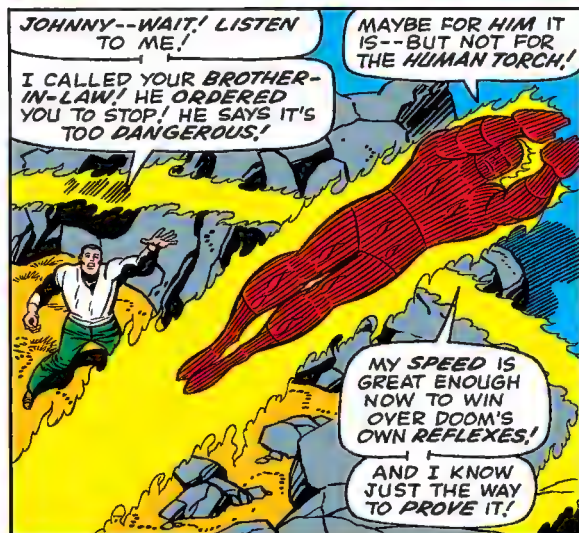
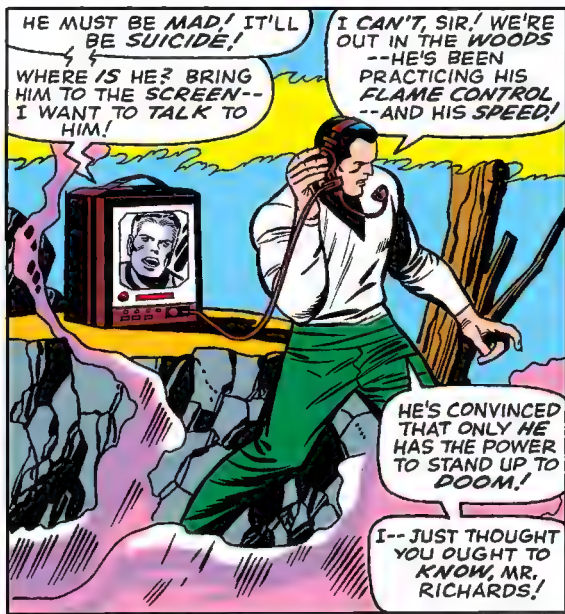


BUT, WE HAVE A MESSAGE
FOR YOU, DEAR! WYATT
WINGFOOT IS CALLING--
ON THE PORTABLE
COMMUNI-TEL!

CAN'T TALK--NOT
NOW!! DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND--?

BUT--IT'S
ABOUT
JOHNNY!
WYATT IS
WORRIED
ABOUT HIM!

JOHNNY?
SOMETHING'S
WRONG--WITH
JOHNNY--?





HOW ABOUT THAT? THE BLAMED MISSILE MUST BE HUMAN!!

IT PUT ON AN EXTRA BURST OF SPEED AT THE LAST MINUTE--AND THE SOLAR-BEAM BLAST MISSED IT BY A MILE!!



IT WORKED, WYATT!

I CAN DO IT, HEAR? I CAN DO IT!

I DUNNO WHAT IT WAS THEY FIRED AT ME, BUT IT COULDN'T COME NEAR ME!

IF I COULD ROCKET PAST THEM FAST ENOUGH, I'LL DO THE SAME WITH DOOM-- I KNOW I WILL!

BUT, JOHNNY-- WHAT ABOUT MISTER RICHARDS' WARNING?

HE SAID YOU MUSTN'T-- YOU WON'T HAVE A CHANCE!

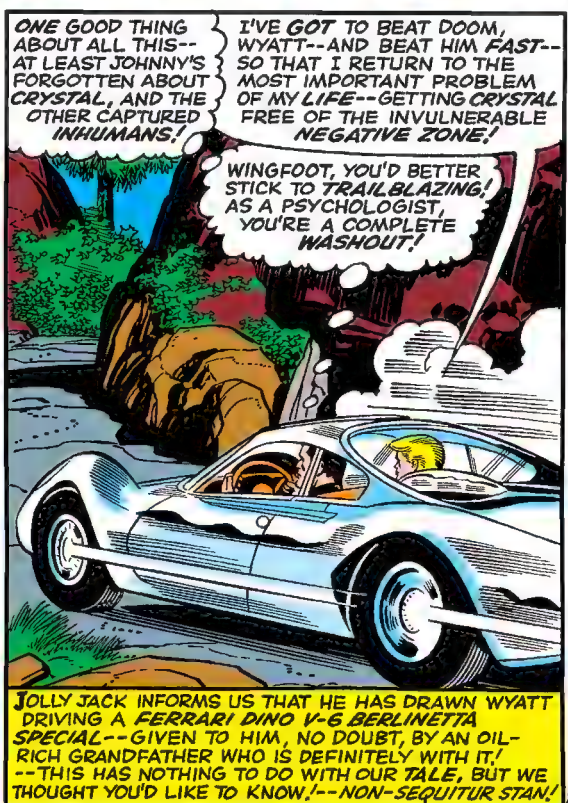


REED'S THE GREATEST GUY I KNOW, WYATT-- AND THE SMARTEST!

I THINK YOU'RE DEAD WRONG, AMIGO-- BUT IF I CAN'T TALK YOU OUT OF IT, I'M TAGGING ALONG WITH YOU-- 'CAUSE I'VE A HUNCH YOU'RE GOING TO NEED A FRIEND!

BUT, SOMETIMES A FELLA JUST HAS TO DO THINGS HIS WAY --WHETHER IT'S RIGHT--OR WRONG!

WELL THEN, MR. WINGFOOT, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

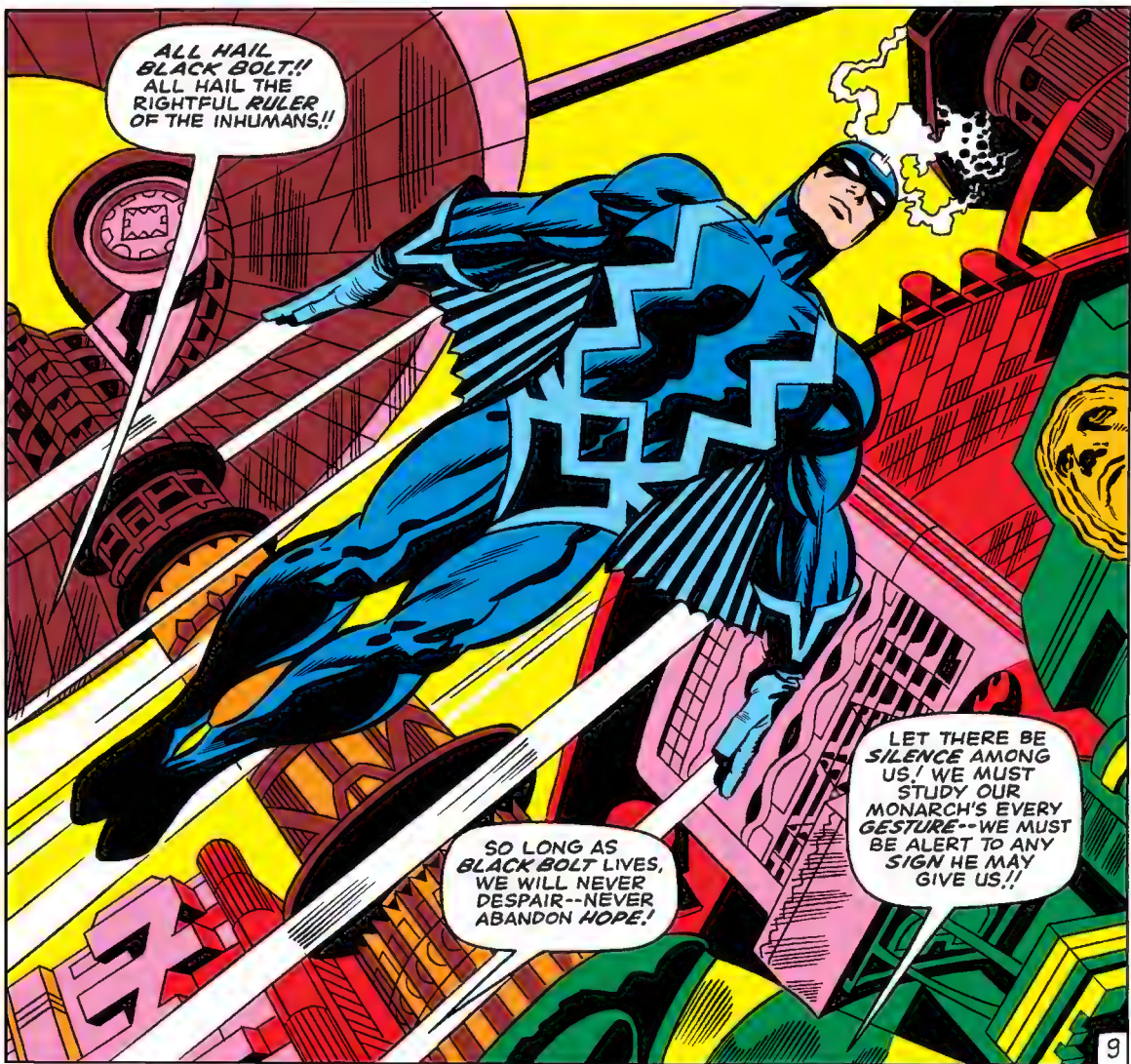
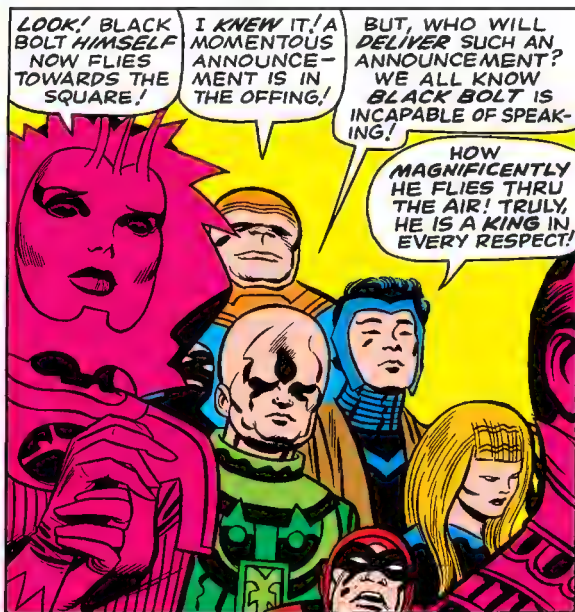
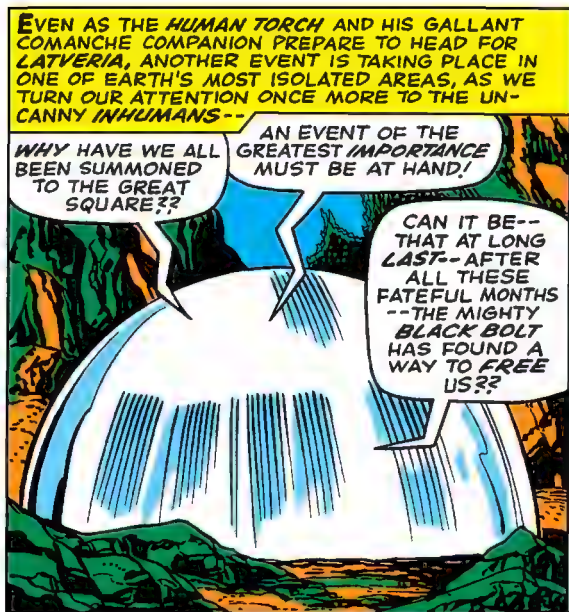


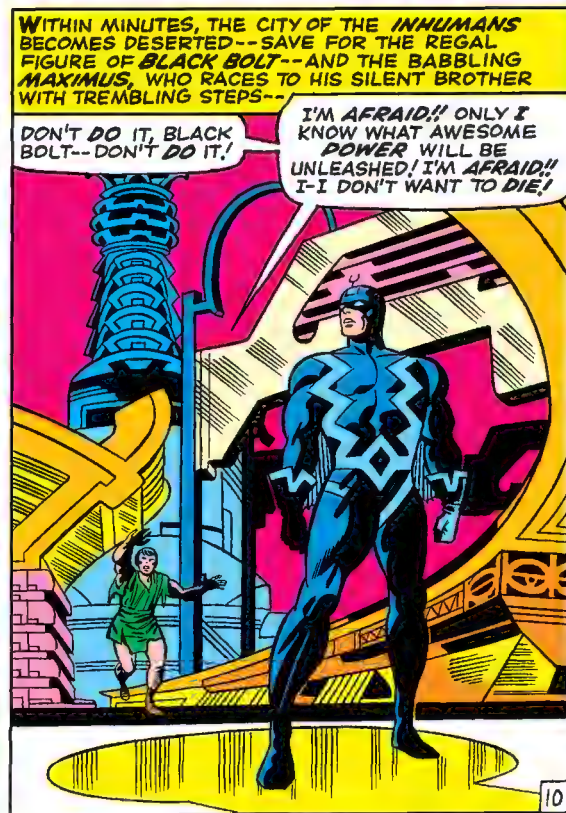
ONE GOOD THING ABOUT ALL THIS-- AT LEAST JOHNNY'S FORGOTTEN ABOUT CRYSTAL, AND THE OTHER CAPTURED INHUMANS!

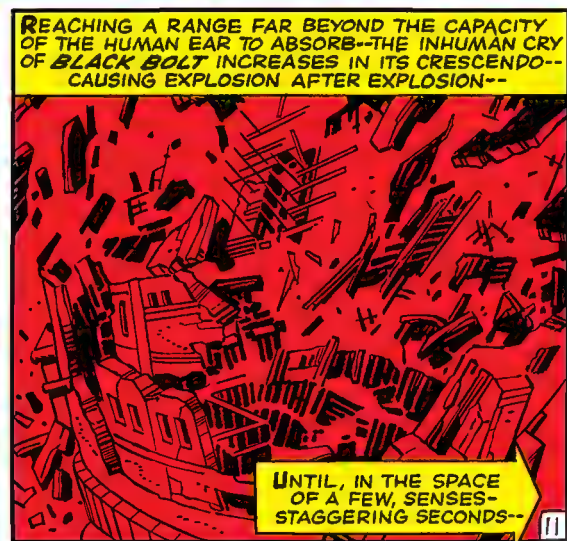
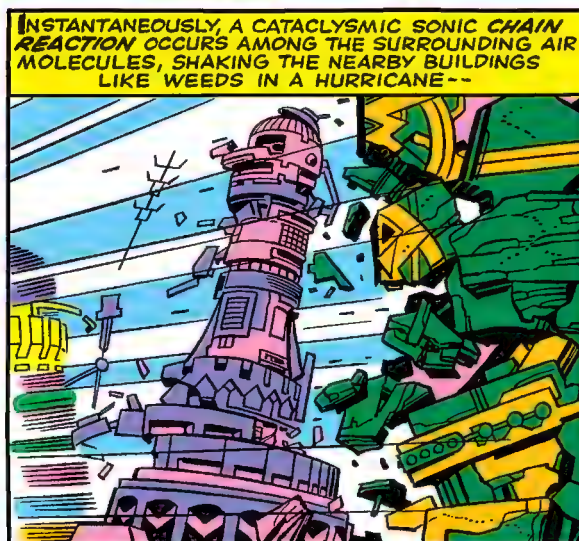
I'VE GOT TO BEAT DOOM, WYATT-- AND BEAT HIM FAST-- SO THAT I RETURN TO THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM OF MY LIFE-- GETTING CRYSTAL FREE OF THE INVULNERABLE NEGATIVE ZONE!

WINGFOOT, YOU'D BETTER STICK TO TRAILBLAZING, AS A PSYCHOLOGIST, YOU'RE A COMPLETE WASHOUT!

JOLLY JACK INFORMS US THAT HE HAS DRAWN WYATT DRIVING A FERRARI DINO V-6 BERLINETTA SPECIAL-- GIVEN TO HIM, NO DOUBT, BY AN OIL-RICH GRANDFATHER WHO IS DEFINITELY WITH IT! --THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH OUR TALE, BUT WE THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW, /-- NON-SEQUITUR STAN!







BLACK BOLT AND MAXIMUS FIND THEMSELVES IN THE CENTER OF A LETHAL RAIN OF DEBRIS--THE REMNANTS OF A ONCE-PROUD CITY--AS THE VIBRATIONS CONTINUE TO GROW, TO SPREAD, TO BECOME MORE AND MORE UNCONTROLLABLE--!

SAVE ME,
BLACK BOLT!!
SAVE ME,
MY BROTHER!



AND THEN, AT LAST, THE INDESCRIBABLE SONIC FORCE STRIKES THE GREAT BARRIER ITSELF, CAUSING AN IMPLOSION OF SUCH INCALCULABLE POWER THAT IT CANNOT POSSIBLY BE DESCRIBED IN MERELY HUMAN TERMS--!

SUFFICE IT TO SAY, THE INCREDIBLE NEGATIVE ZONE *VANISHES* IN THE SPACE OF A SINGLE HEART-BEAT--AS SUDDENLY, AND INEXPLICABLY AS IT HAD FIRST APPEARED!



BLACK BOLT--
YOU'VE *DONE*
IT!!

YOU'VE
GIVEN THE
INHUMANS--
THEIR
FREEDOM!!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN ANOTHER REMOTE CITY IN THE HEART OF EUROPE, AN EQUALLY ASTONISHING EVENT IS TAKING PLACE--

IT IS THE EVIL ONE--
IT IS DR. DOOM--RIDING THE
AIR CURRENTS LIKE A MAD,
ARMORED WITCH!

NOT SO, GUSTAVE!
NO MERE WITCH
WAS EVER AS
DEADLY--EVER AS
UNSTOPPABLE!!

WHAT NEW
OUTRAGE CAN
HE BE PLANNING
NOW?

WITHIN SECONDS, THE FEARFUL VILLAGERS
RECEIVE THEIR ANSWER--

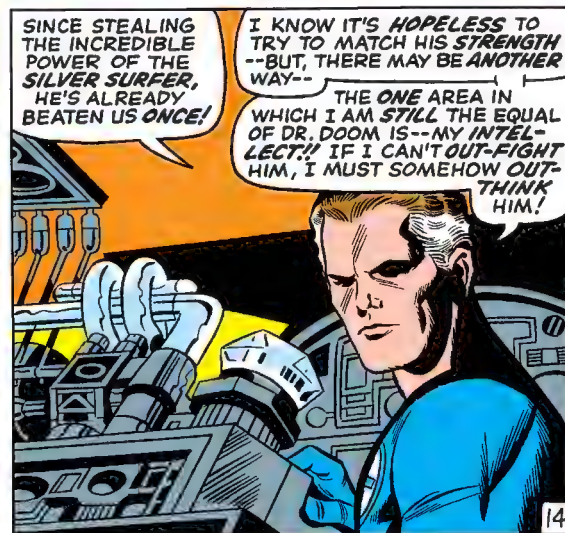
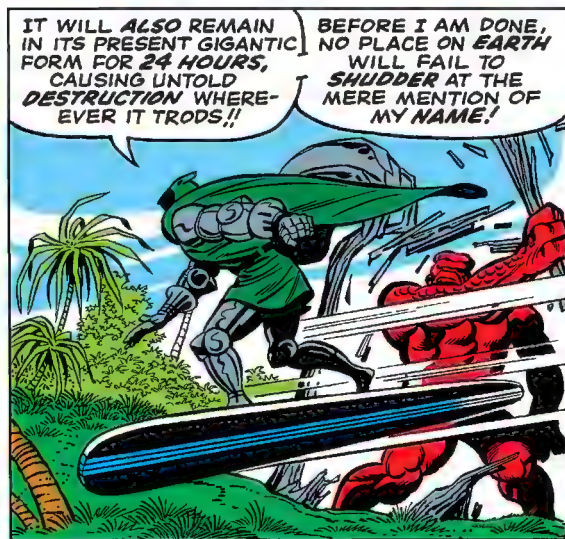
HAH! USING
THE POWERS OF
THE SILVER SURFER,
HOW SIMPLE IT IS
TO CAUSE THE AIR
MOLECULES TO
ABSORB ALL LIGHT
--THUS TURNING
THE SKIES PITCH
BLACK!

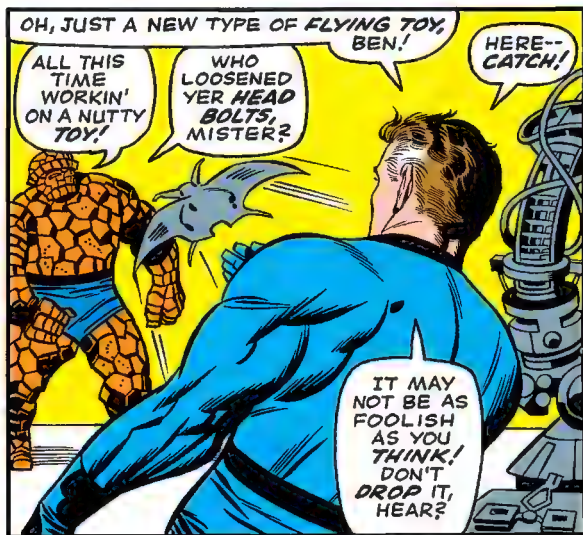
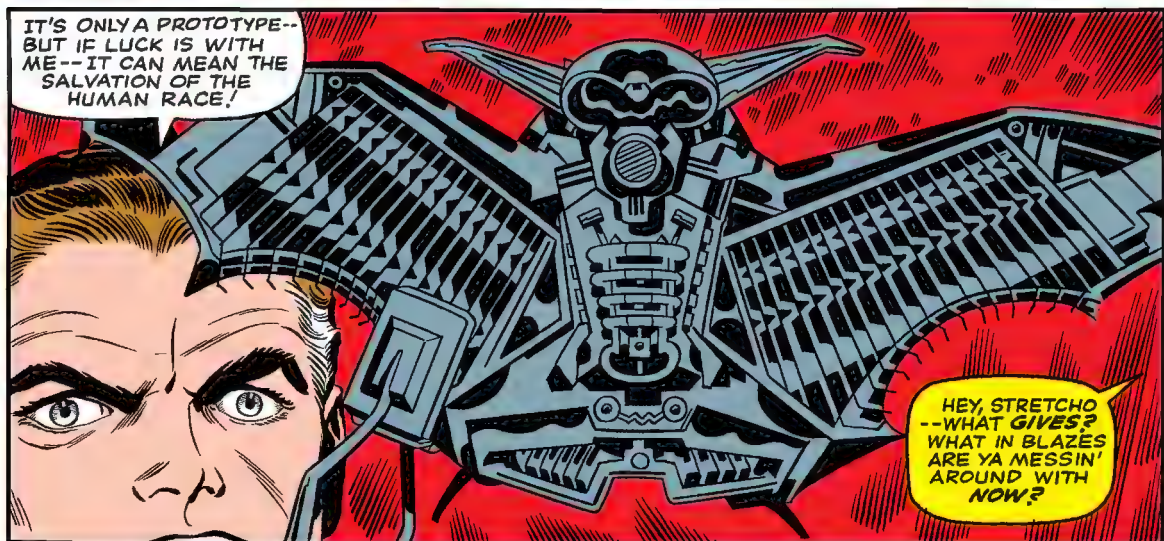
I HAVE CREATED TOTAL
DARKNESS--A DARKNESS
WHICH WILL LAST
24 HOURS--TO SHOW THE
HELPLESS WORLD HOW
MIRACULOUS I AM!

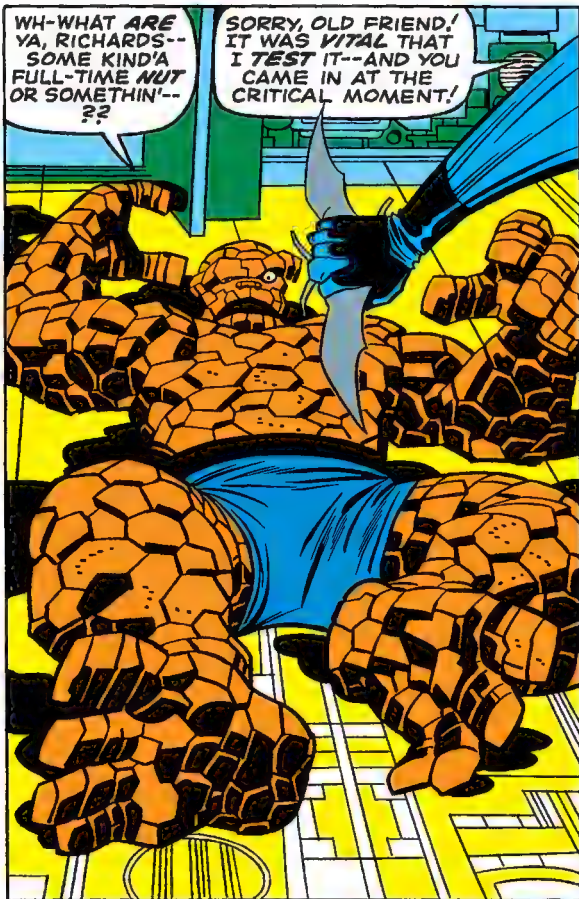
BUT, THERE ARE MORE
MIRACLES TO BE
WROUGHT--FAR FAR
MORE!!

HERE, ABOVE THE
WARM, SLUMBERING
AEGEAN ISLANDS, I
SHALL UNLEASH
ANOTHER BOLT OF
COSMIC POWER--

AND,
I SHALL
DO IT--
NOW!







WH-WHAT ARE YA, RICHARDS-- SOME KIND'A FULL-TIME NUT OR SOMETHIN'--??

SORRY, OLD FRIEND! IT WAS VITAL THAT I TEST IT--AND YOU CAME IN AT THE CRITICAL MOMENT!



I SEE YOU'RE STILL GROGGY--IT'S DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO GET TO YOUR FEET!

THAT'S EXCELLENT --EXCELLENT!

IF IT CAN AFFECT A POWER-HOUSE LIKE YOU THAT WAY--THINK OF THE EFFECT IT MAY HAVE ON DR. DOOM!

SO! YA WERE JUST USIN' ME FER A SIMPLE LITTLE TEST, HUH?

AH, YOU'RE GETTING ANGRY! GOOD! IT'S THE REACTION I HOPED FOR!



YEAH? WELL, LET'S SEE IF THIS IS SOMETHIN' ELSE YA BEEN HOPIN' FOR!!

THBOOM!

ACTUALLY, IT IS, BEN! NOW SETTLE DOWN AND LET ME EXPLAIN --!



MY LITTLE GADGET WEAKENED YOU EVEN MORE THAN YOU THOUGHT--BUT, DON'T WORRY--THE EFFECT IS ONLY TEMPORARY!

HOWEVER, ITS MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTION IS TO MAKE DOOM ANGRY--THE MORE FURIOUS HE GETS, THE BETTER CHANCE WE'LL HAVE TO BEAT HIM!

NOW, YOU'D BETTER REST AWHILE, BIG FELLA! WE'VE A TOUGH FIGHT AHEAD OF US!

AND, AT THE VERY MOMENT THOSE PROPHETIC WORDS LEAVE REED RICHARDS' LIPS, A WHOLE NEW WORLD ALSO LOOMS AHEAD OF THE NEWLY-FREED **INHUMANS**--

THE BARRIER IS GONE! WE'RE FREE--FREE!

OUR CITY IS A SHAMBLES-- AND YET, WHAT DOES IT MATTER--?

BY SACRIFICING ONE IMPRISONED CITY WE HAVE GAINED OURSELVES--A WORLD!

AT LAST! AT LAST-- WE SHALL LIVE BENEATH THE SUN ONCE MORE--ABLE TO BREATHE THE COOL, FRESH, HEAVEN-SENT AIR!

BLACK BOLT DID IT! OUR KING HAS FREED US-- AS WE KNEW HE WOULD!

BUT NOW--WITH AN ENTIRE **PLANET** LOOMING BEFORE US-- WHAT DO WE DO? WHERE DO WE GO?

IS THE HUMAN RACE YET READY FOR US--??

BUT, ONE THERE IS WHO THINKS ONLY OF A REUNION --ONLY OF FINALLY REJOINING THE BOY SHE LOVES--

NOW I CAN FIND JOHNNY AGAIN! NOTHING WILL EVER SEPARATE US--WE'LL BE TOGETHER-- AT LAST!

OUR HEARTS REJOICE FOR YOU, CRYSTAL! NOW WE ARE ALL FREE TO FOLLOW OUR OWN PURSUITS!

LOOK! THERE IS BLACK BOLT-- WAITING FOR US!

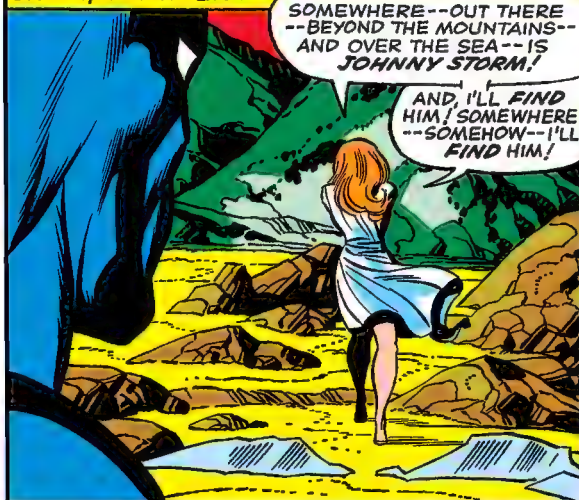
HOW I LONG TO TAKE HIM IN MY ARMS-- TO TELL HIM HOW PROUD HE'S MADE ME--HOW I LOVE HIM--HOW I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING HIM!

BUT, THERE IS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE! OUR MOMENT MUST WAIT-- NO MATTER HOW UNBEAR-ABLE EACH SECOND WITHOUT HIM MAY BE!

BLACK BOLT! YOU RISKED EVERYTHING FOR US--AND YOU WON! WE'LL NEVER FORGET YOU-- NEVER! NEVER!

NOW THAT YOU'VE SET THEM FREE-- THEY'LL IDOLIZE YOU FOR- EVER! I'VE LOST ANY CHANCE-- OF BECOMING--KING!

BUT, EVEN AS THE MAD MAXIMUS BABBLES ON, THE GIRL NAMED CRYSTAL--FAIR AND FRESH AS THE MOUNTAIN DEW--STEPS OUT INTO THE WAITING WORLD--SAVORING ITS SCENTS, ITS SOUNDS, EVERY MIRACLE OF NATURE WHICH UNFOLDS BEFORE HER EAGER, HUNGRY EYES--



SOMEWHERE--OUT THERE--BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS--AND OVER THE SEA--IS JOHNNY STORM!

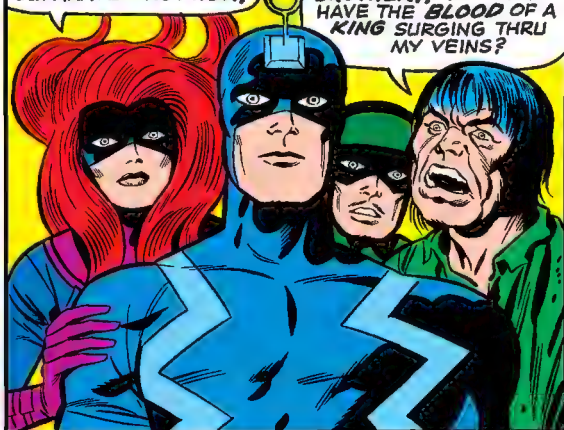
AND I'LL FIND HIM! SOMEWHERE--SOMEHOW--I'LL FIND HIM!

WE CANNOT LET CRYSTAL GO ALONE! WE MUST JOIN HER, BLACK BOLT!

WE SIX--YOU, GORGON, KARNAK, TRITON, CRYSTAL, AND MYSELF--HAVE BEEN TOGETHER SO LONG-- WE CANNOT SEPARATE--NOT NOW!

YES! GO! GO! WITH YOU GONE, I'LL STILL HAVE A CHANCE TO BE KING!

THOUGH THEY THINK ME MAD--AM I NOT STILL YOUR BROTHER?? DO I NOT HAVE THE BLOOD OF A KING SURGING THRU MY VEINS?



WHAT?? AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE--YOU DARE SPEAK SO TO BLACK BOLT??!

YOU DARE STILL ASPIRE TO THE THRONE? BUT, YOU SHALL ASPIRE NO LONGER, MADMAN--NOT WHILE KARNAK LIVES!

FFFTT!!!

NO, KARNAK--!

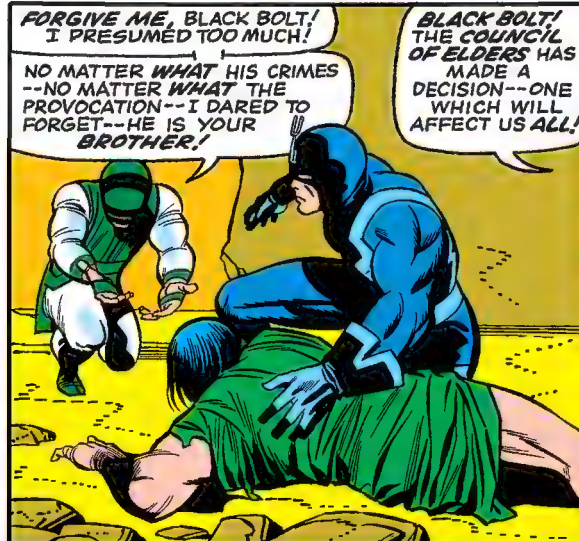
--ONLY BLACK BOLT HAS THE RIGHT!!



FORGIVE ME, BLACK BOLT! I PRESUMED TOO MUCH!

NO MATTER WHAT HIS CRIMES--NO MATTER WHAT THE PROVOCATION--I DARED TO FORGET--HE IS YOUR BROTHER!

BLACK BOLT! THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS HAS MADE A DECISION--ONE WHICH WILL AFFECT US ALL!



IT HAS BEEN DECIDED--BY ACCLAMATION--THAT WE ARE TO SEPARATE!

WE, THE SIX WHO FORM THE ROYAL FAMILY AND COURT, SHALL ENTER THE WORLD OF THE HUMANS!

WHILE OUR BRETHREN SHALL REMAIN, TO REBUILD OUR CITY, AND TEND OUR LAND--

--UNTIL THE GLORIOUS DAY WHEN WE SHALL ALL BE TOGETHER AGAIN--PROUD AND UNITED ONCE MORE!

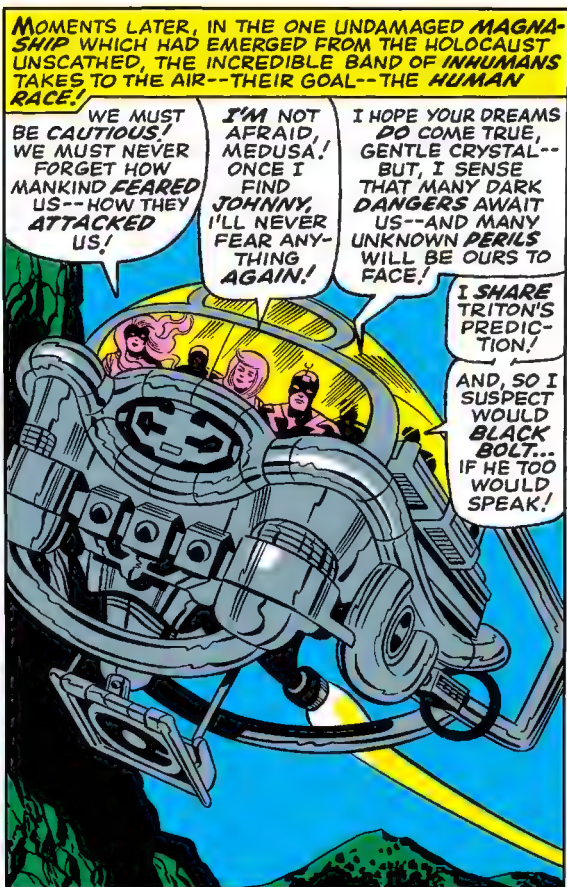




BLACK BOLT SIGNALS HIS **APPROVAL!** THE DECISION IS THUS **ROYALLY RATIFIED!**

WE SHALL BE FAITHFUL TO YOUR TRUST, BLACK BOLT! UPON YOUR RETURN, THIS KINGDOM SHALL BE AS IT WAS--A LAND OF JOY--AND PEACE!

THEN, THE TIME IS COME TO **DEPART--** AND FACE WHATEVER **BEFALLS!**



MOMENTS LATER, IN THE ONE UNDAMAGED **MAGNA-SHIP** WHICH HAD EMERGED FROM THE HOLOCAUST UNSCATHED, THE INCREDIBLE BAND OF **INHUMANS** TAKES TO THE AIR--THEIR GOAL--THE **HUMAN RACE!**

WE MUST BE **CAUTIOUS!** WE MUST NEVER FORGET HOW MANKIND **FEARED US--** HOW THEY **ATTACKED US!**

I'M NOT AFRAID, MEDUSA! ONCE I FIND **JOHNNY**, I'LL NEVER FEAR ANYTHING AGAIN!

I HOPE YOUR DREAMS DO COME TRUE, GENTLE CRYSTAL-- BUT, I SENSE THAT MANY DARK **DANGERS** AWAIT US--AND MANY UNKNOWN **PERILS** WILL BE OURS TO FACE!

I SHARE TRITON'S PREDICTION!

AND, SO I SUSPECT WOULD **BLACK BOLT...** IF HE TOO WOULD SPEAK!



WHILE, ON THE VANISHING GROUND BELOW--

THEY'VE GONE!! THE FOOLS! NOW, NOTHING CAN STOP ME FROM REGAINING THE CROWN! AT LAST I'LL BE KING! KING!



WAIT! HEAR ME! I NEED AN ARMY! SAY YOU'LL HELP ME, AND YOU SHALL BE MY ROYAL CHAMBERLAIN!

BEGONE, MADMAN! WE HAVE A CITY TO REBUILD!

BUT, THINK OF THE WONDERS I CAN CREATE-- THE WEAPONS I CAN BUILD!

WE HAVE NO USE FOR WEAPONS NOW!



LATER-- I'VE APPROACHED **EVERYBODY!** THEY IGNORE ME--MOCK ME--! ME--**MAXIMUS!!**

BUT, I'LL SHOW THEM! I'LL SHOW THEM I'M NOT MAD! I'LL CONQUER ALL-- I'LL DO IT ALONE!

IF I COULD ONLY REMEMBER--ALL MY WEAPONS--MY PLANS--MY SCHEMES--

WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER?? WHY? WHY?

AND SO WE LEAVE THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING--FOR SUCH AS HE, FORGETFULNESS CAN SOMETIMES BE--A BLESSING!

WHILE, BACK IN THE LABORATORY-WORKSHOP OF ONE OF THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC GENIUSES OF ALL TIME--

THAT'S IT, BIG FELLA--KEEP BENDING THAT BAR UNTIL I SAY STOP!

THE CORRECT ANGLE OF CURVATURE IS ALL-IMPORTANT!

OKAY! THAT'S IT! HOLD IT NOW!

WADDAYA WANT I SHOULD DO NEXT--TEAR UP SOME PHONE BOOKS FOR YA?

KNOCK OFF THE FLIP TALK, OLD FRIEND!

IF I MAKE THE SLIGHTEST MISCALCULATION ON ANY OF THESE SUB-MINIATURIZED COMPONENTS, WE'LL HAVE HAD IT!

BEATS ME HOW ANY OF THEM NUTTY MAD SCIENTIST GIZMOS ARE GONNA BOTHER A GUY WHO'S FLOATIN' AROUND WITH COSMIC POWER-- BUT, IF YOU SAY SO--

I'VE GOT TO SAY SO! IT'S OUR ONLY HOPE!

THEN, LONG HOURS LATER--

NEITHER OF YOU HAVE HAD BREAKFAST, LUNCH, OR DINNER! YOU JUST CAN'T GO ON THIS WAY!

I INSIST YOU BOTH HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT-- RIGHT NOW!

SUSIE'S RIGHT, STRETCHO! I'M WASTIN' AWAY TO ONLY HALF A TON!

I-I'M AFRAID I DIDN'T REALIZE--IT WAS SO LATE!

THANK YOU, DARLING! WE'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU!

AND SO... SNEEESH! I COULD HAVE MORE LAUGHS EATIN' ON YANCY STREET! WHAT'S WITH YOU TWO? YA EACH GOT CHARLEY-HORSED LIPS OR SOMETHIN'?

SORRY, BEN! I JUST CAN'T GET DR. DOOM OUT OF MY MIND-- WONDERING WHEN HE'LL STRIKE!

IF WE CAN'T STOP HIM--NEXT TIME HE APPEARS--THE WHOLE PLANET MIGHT BE HELPLESS BEFORE HIM!

HEY, I JUST REALIZED--IT WUZ MORE FUN WHEN YOU WUZ QUIET!

THEN, AS ALL THE WORLD SEEMS TO HOLD ITS BREATH--WAITING FOR THE COMING CATACLYSM--

MY POWER HAS BEEN TESTED-- AND IS EVEN GREATER THAN I HOPED!

THEREFORE, THERE'S NO NEED FOR ANY FURTHER DELAY!

NO FORCE--NO COMBINATION OF FORCES CAN POSSIBLY STOP ME!

BEFORE THIS DAY IS ENDED, MANKIND SHALL GROVEL HELPLESSLY AT MY FEET--

AND, AS FATE HAS OBVIOUSLY ORDAINED--DOCTOR DOOM SHALL BE MASTER OF EARTH!

NEXT

THE TIDE TURNS!



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"THE
PERIL
AND THE
POWER!"



THE FABULOUS F.F. FACE THE GREATEST THREAT ON EARTH!

"THE PERIL AND THE POWER!"

WITH THE MATCHLESS **COSMIC POWER** HE HAS STOLEN FROM THE **SILVER SURFER**, THE DEADLY **DR. DOOM** DISPLAYS HIS UTTER CONTEMPT FOR MANKIND IN A DIABOLICAL DEMONSTRATION OF FEAR-SOME FEATS... WHILE MR. AND MRS. **REED RICHARDS**, IN COMPANY WITH A FIGHTING-MAD **THING**, GRIMLY FOLLOW THE ARCH-VILLAIN'S PROGRESS VIA THE F.F.'S SATELLITE T.V. ...

I...CAN'T BEAR TO WATCH ANY LONGER, REED...

I FEEL SO HELPLESS! HE CAN ACHIEVE ANY GHASTLY GOAL HE DESIRES!

HE'S TOYING WITH THAT OCEAN LINER LIKE SOME SUPER-POWERED MADMAN!

HEY, STRETCHO! HOW'S ABOUT SOME ACTION?

NOT YET, BEN! WE WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE!

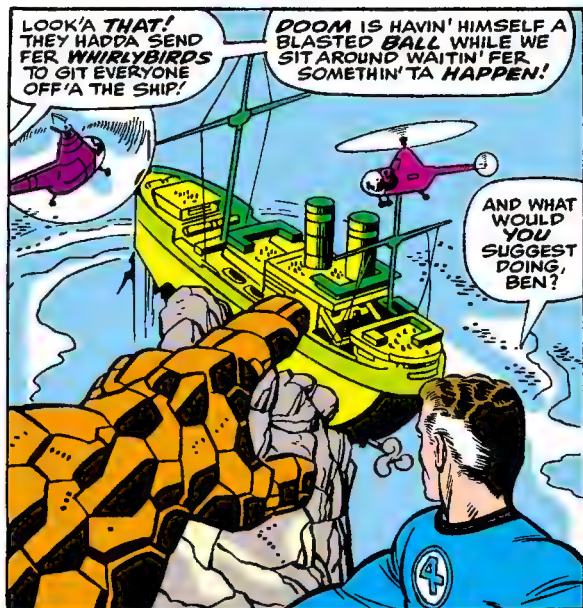
NUTS! WADDAYA NEED... A BLASTED GUARANTEE BEFORE YA'LL TACKLE A GUY?

I'M SICK 'A WATCHIN' ON THE SIDELINES! I SAY WE GO AFTER 'IM... AND CLOBBER THE CREEP!

IF YOU'RE TOO CHICKEN TA FIGHT A CRUMB LIKE HIM ... I AIN'T!

DAZZLINGLY DEPICTED BY:
STAN LEE and JACK KIRBY

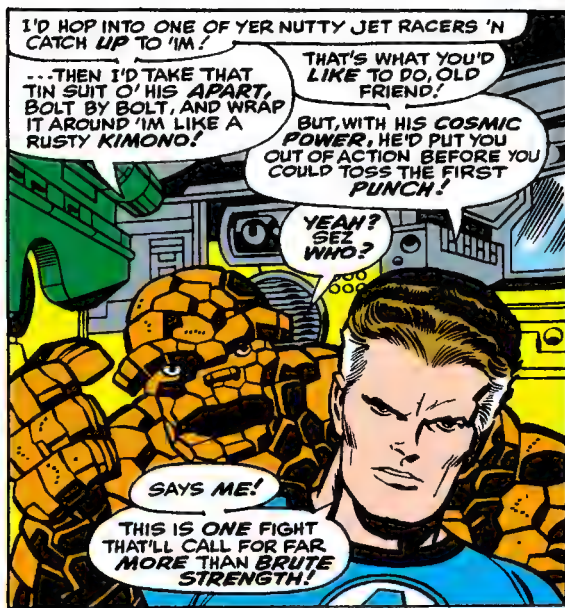
INKING BY: **JOE SINNOTT** | LETTERING BY: **SAM ROSEN**



LOOK'A **THAT!**
THEY HADDA SEND
FER **WHIRLYBIRDS**
TO GIT EVERYONE
OFF'A THE SHIP!

DOOM IS HAVIN' HIMSELF A
BLASTED **BALL** WHILE WE
SIT AROUND WAITIN' FER
SOMETHIN' TA **HAPPEN!**

AND WHAT
WOULD
YOU
SUGGEST
DOING,
BEN?



I'D HOP INTO ONE OF YER **NUTTY** JET RACERS 'N
CATCH UP TO 'IM!

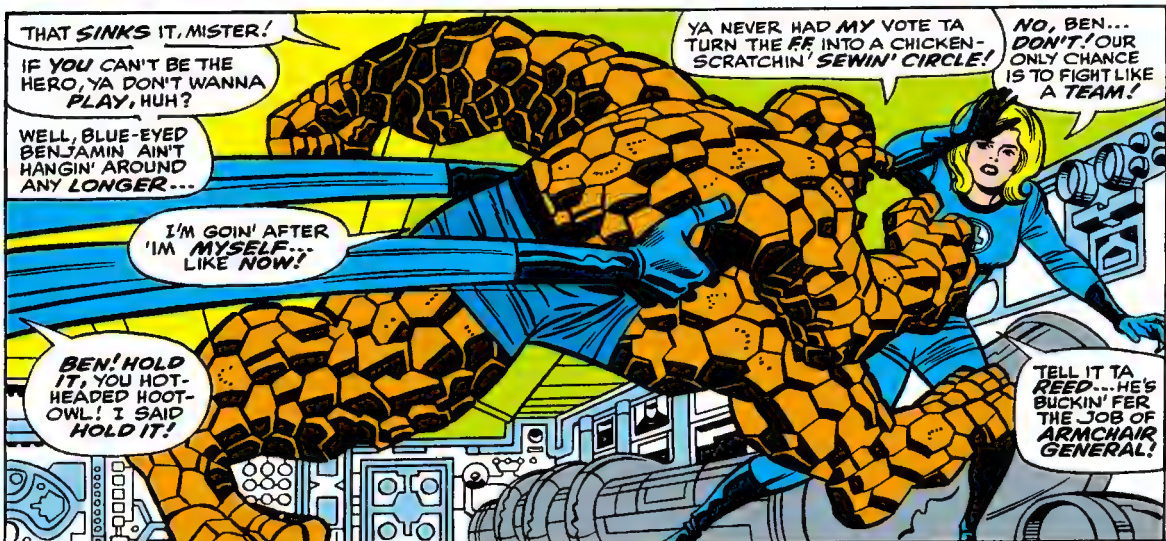
THAT'S WHAT YOU'D
LIKE TO DO, OLD
FRIEND!

BUT, WITH HIS **COSMIC**
POWER, HE'D PUT YOU
OUT OF ACTION BEFORE YOU
COULD TOSS THE FIRST
PUNCH!

YEAH?
SEZ
WHO?

SAYS ME!

THIS IS ONE FIGHT
THAT'LL CALL FOR FAR
MORE THAN **BRUTE**
STRENGTH!



THAT **SINKS** IT, MISTER!

IF YOU CAN'T BE THE
HERO, YA DON'T WANNA
PLAY, HUH?

WELL, BLUE-EYED
BENJAMIN AIN'T
HANGIN' AROUND
ANY **LONGER**...

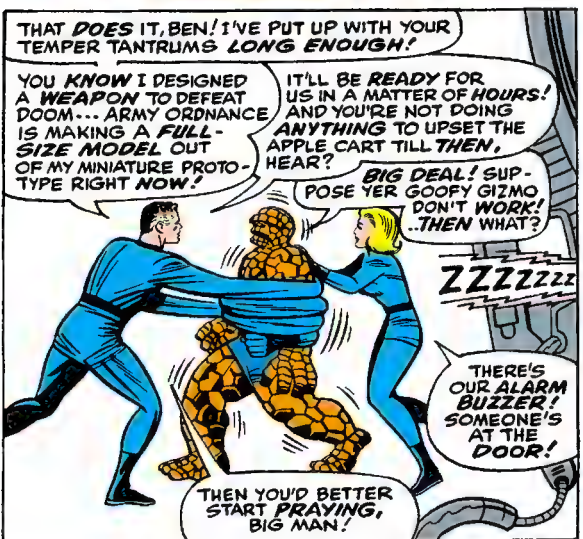
I'M GOIN' AFTER
'IM **MYSELF**...
LIKE **NOW!**

BEN! HOLD
IT, YOU HOT-
HEADED HOOT-
OWL! I SAID
HOLD IT!

YA NEVER HAD MY VOTE TA
TURN THE **FF** INTO A CHICKEN-
SCRATCHIN' **SEWIN' CIRCLE!**

NO, BEN...
DON'T! OUR
ONLY CHANCE
IS TO FIGHT LIKE
A **TEAM!**

TELL IT TA
REED... HE'S
BUCKIN' FER
THE JOB OF
ARMCHAIR
GENERAL!



THAT **DOES** IT, BEN! I'VE PUT UP WITH YOUR
TEMPER TANTRUMS **LONG ENOUGH!**

YOU **KNOW** I DESIGNED
A **WEAPON** TO DEFEAT
DOOM... ARMY ORDNANCE
IS MAKING A **FULL-**
SIZE MODEL OUT
OF MY MINATURE PROTO-
TYPE **RIGHT NOW!**

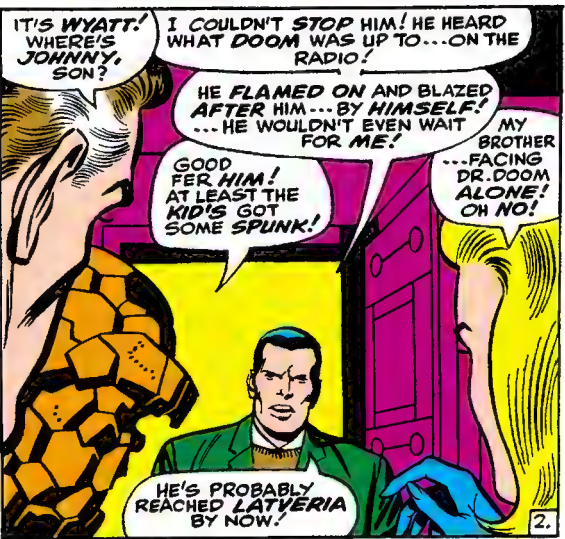
IT'LL BE **READY** FOR
US IN A MATTER OF **HOURS!**
AND YOU'RE NOT DOING
ANYTHING TO UPSET THE
APPLE CART TILL **THEN**,
HEAR?

BIG DEAL! SUP-
POSE YER GOOFY GIZMO
DON'T **WORK!**
...THEN WHAT?

ZZZZZZZZ

THERE'S
OUR **ALARM**
BUZZER!
SOMEONE'S
AT THE
DOOR!

THEN YOU'D BETTER
START **PRAYING**,
BIG MAN!



IT'S **WYATT!**
WHERE'S
JOHNNY,
SON?

I COULDN'T STOP HIM! HE HEARD
WHAT **DOOM** WAS UP TO... ON THE
RADIO!

HE **FLAMED** ON AND **BLAZED**
AFTER HIM... BY **HIMSELF!**
...HE WOULDN'T EVEN WAIT
FOR **ME!**

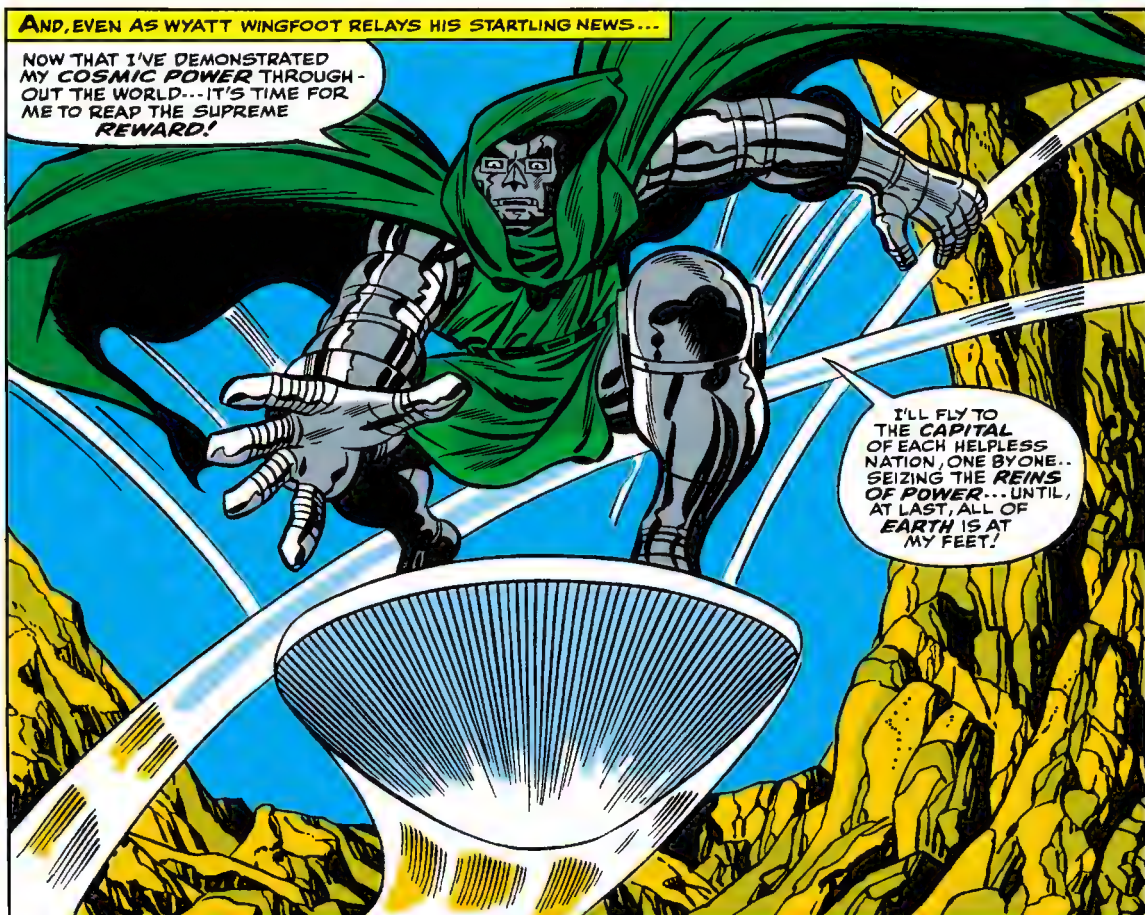
GOOD
FER **HIM!**
AT LEAST THE
KID'S GOT
SOME **SPUNK!**

MY
BROTHER
...FACING
DR. **DOOM**
ALONE!
OH **NO!**

HE'S PROBABLY
REACHED **LATVERIA**
BY **NOW!**

AND, EVEN AS WYATT WINGFOOT RELAYS HIS STARTLING NEWS...

NOW THAT I'VE DEMONSTRATED
MY **COSMIC POWER** THROUGH-
OUT THE WORLD...IT'S TIME FOR
ME TO REAP THE SUPREME
REWARD!



I'LL FLY TO
THE **CAPITAL**
OF EACH HELPLESS
NATION, ONE BY ONE..
SEIZING THE **REINS**
OF **POWER**...UNTIL,
AT LAST, ALL OF
EARTH IS AT
MY FEET!

BUT THEN, SUDDENLY, A BLISTERING **HEAT BOLT**
BLAZES TOWARD THE FLYING FIGURE, AS A CHALLENGING
VOICE RINGS OUT...

OKAY, DOOM...
THE PARTY'S OVER!
EITHER TOSS IN THE
TOWEL, OR ELSE..!

**THE
TORCH!**

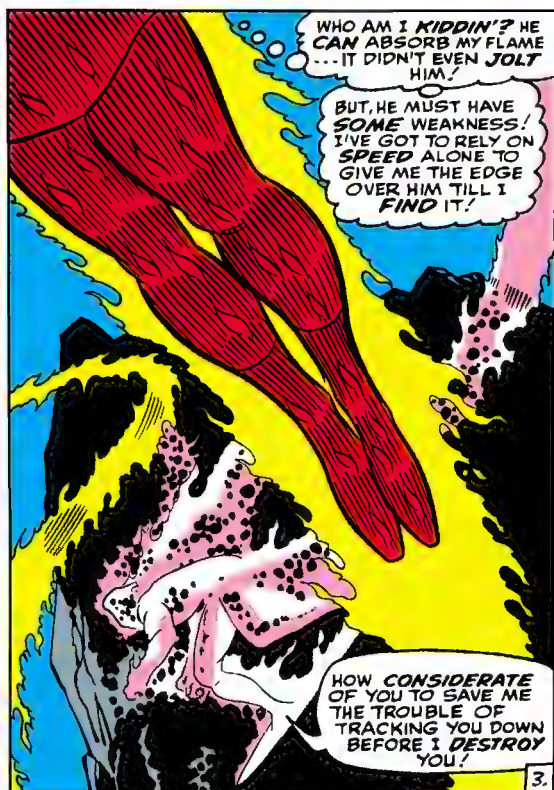
YOU YOUNG FOOL..
MY COSMIC ENERGY
CAN ABSORB YOUR
USELESS **FLAME** AS
A SPONGE SOAKS
UP **WATER!**



YOU'RE WHISTLIN'
IN THE DARK, MISTER..
AND WE BOTH KNOW
IT!

WHO AM I KIDDIN'? HE
CAN ABSORB MY FLAME
...IT DIDN'T EVEN JOLT
HIM!

BUT, HE MUST HAVE
SOME WEAKNESS!
I'VE GOT TO RELY ON
SPEED ALONE TO
GIVE ME THE EDGE
OVER HIM TILL I
FIND IT!



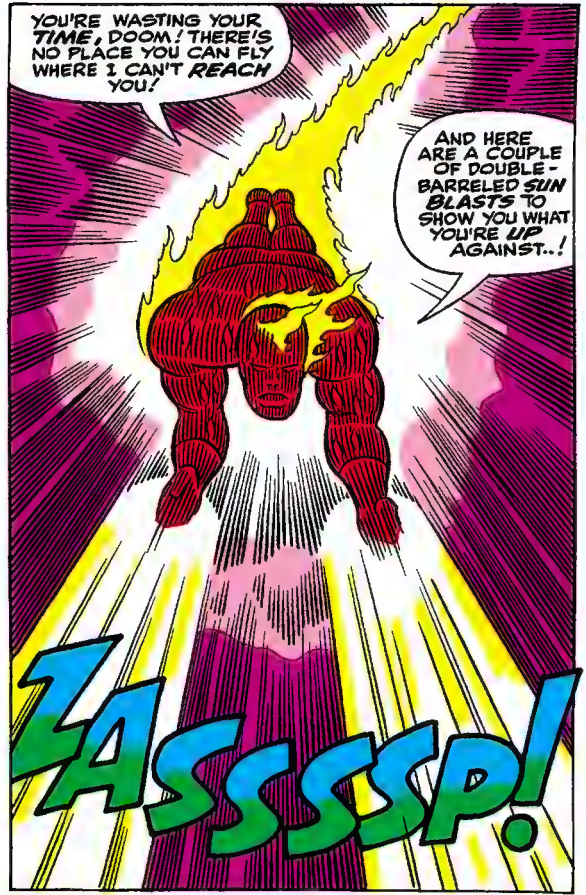
HOW **CONSIDERATE**
OF YOU TO SAVE ME
THE TROUBLE OF
TRACKING YOU DOWN
BEFORE I **DESTROY**
YOU!



HE'S CAUSING THE FLAME. I HURLED AT HIM TO VAPORIZE...

BUT, I CAN'T LET UP... CAN'T GIVE HIM THE INITIATIVE! I'VE GOTTA KEEP ATTACKING...!

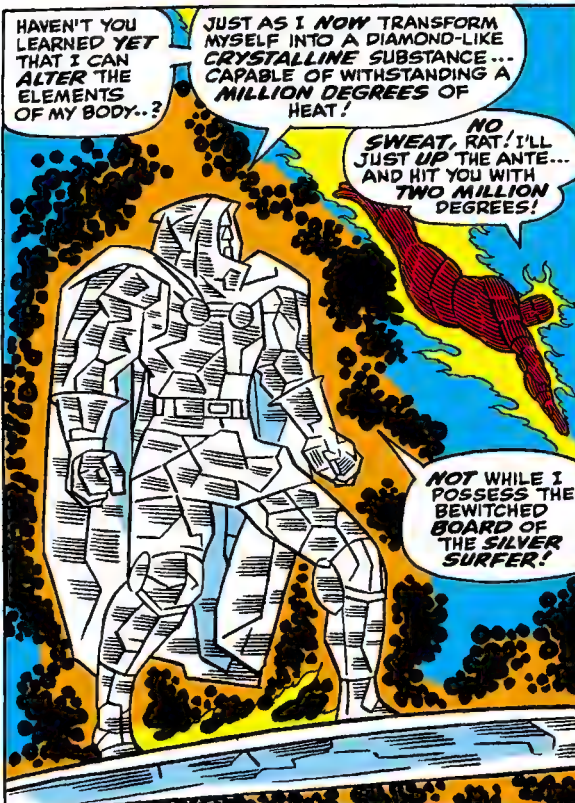
LET'S SEE HOW GOOD HIS COSMIC POWER IS AGAINST A FAR GREATER CONCENTRATION OF FLAME!



YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, DOOM! THERE'S NO PLACE YOU CAN FLY WHERE I CAN'T REACH YOU!

AND HERE ARE A COUPLE OF DOUBLE-BARRELED SUN BLASTS TO SHOW YOU WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST..!

ZASSSSP!

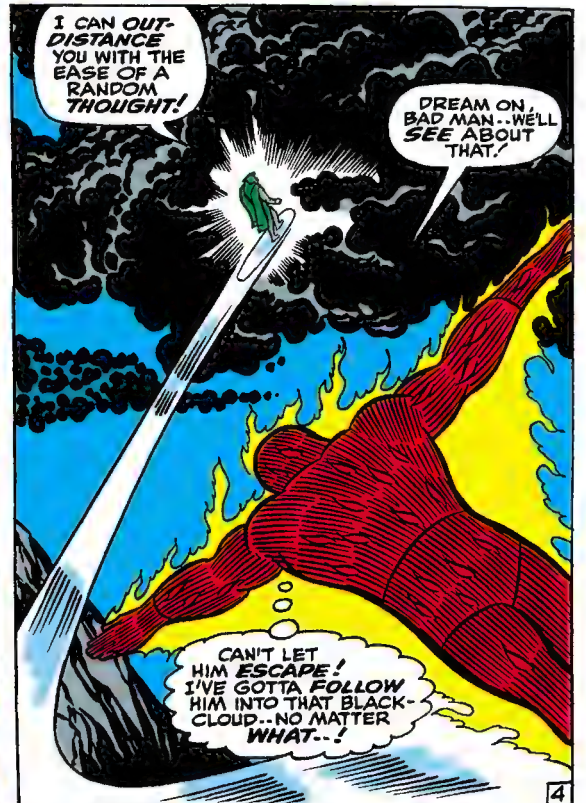


HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED YET THAT I CAN ALTER THE ELEMENTS OF MY BODY..?

JUST AS I NOW TRANSFORM MYSELF INTO A DIAMOND-LIKE CRYSTALLINE SUBSTANCE... CAPABLE OF WITHSTANDING A MILLION DEGREES OF HEAT!

NO SWEAT, RAT! I'LL JUST UP THE ANTE... AND HIT YOU WITH TWO MILLION DEGREES!

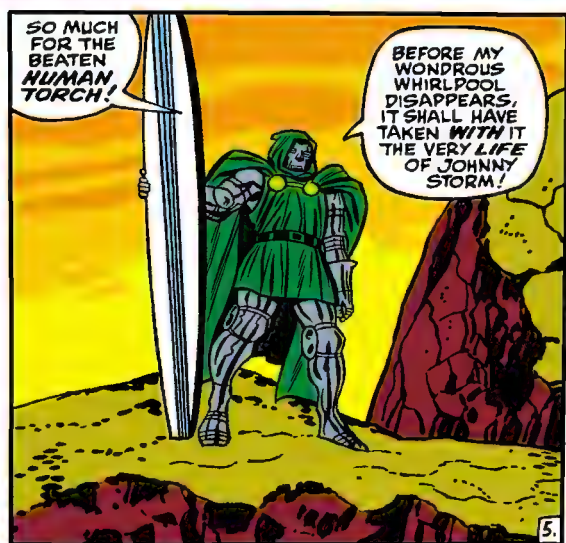
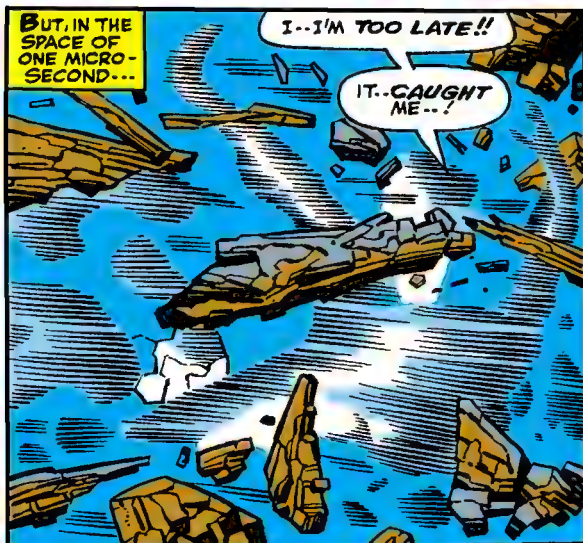
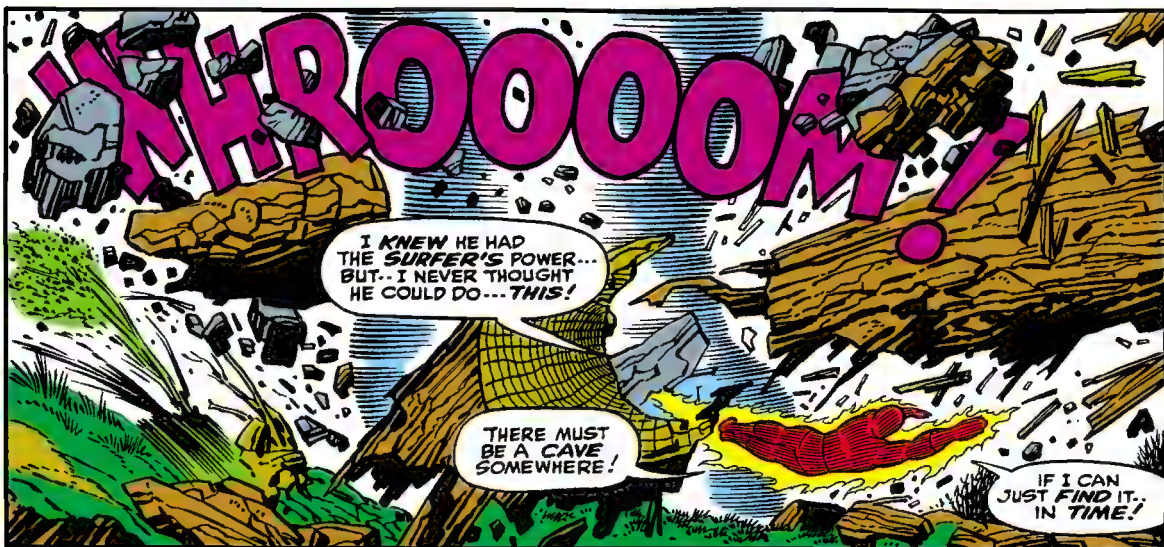
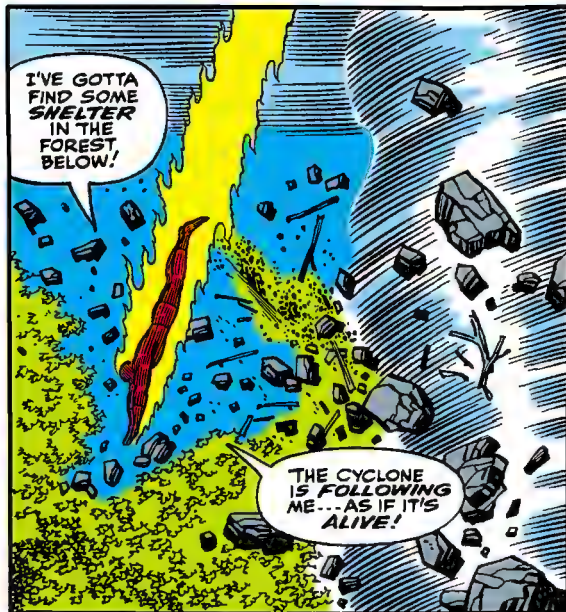
NOT WHILE I POSSESS THE BEWITCHED BOARD OF THE SILVER SURFER!

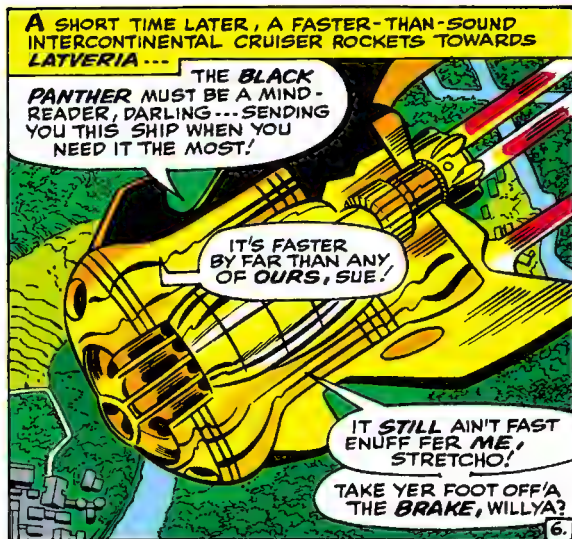
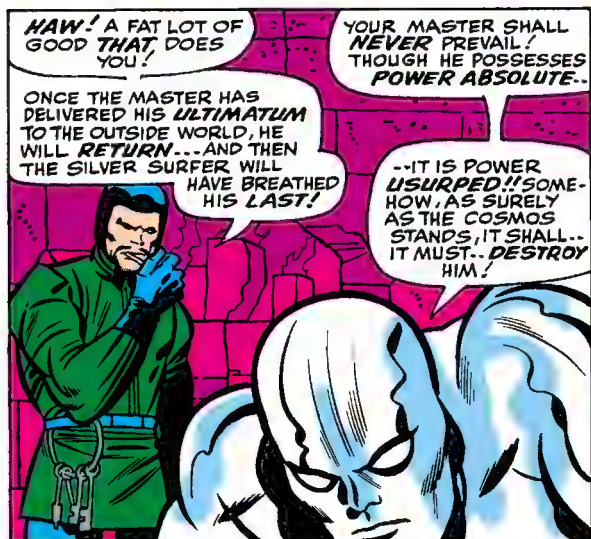
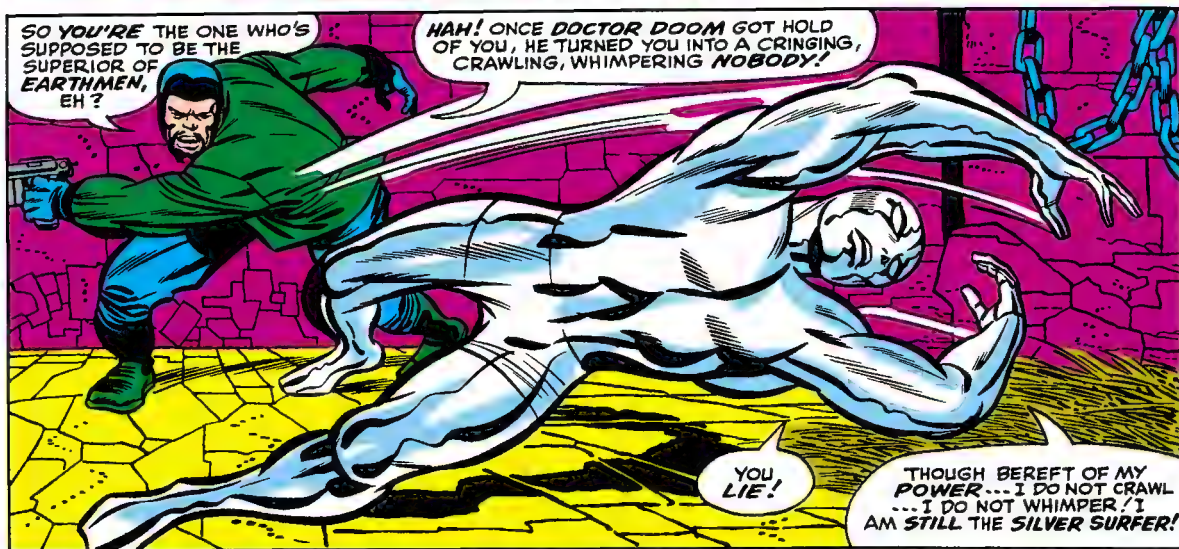
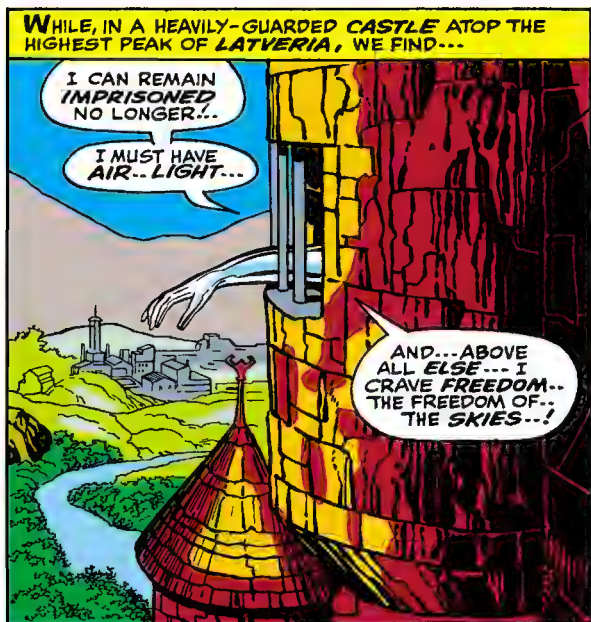


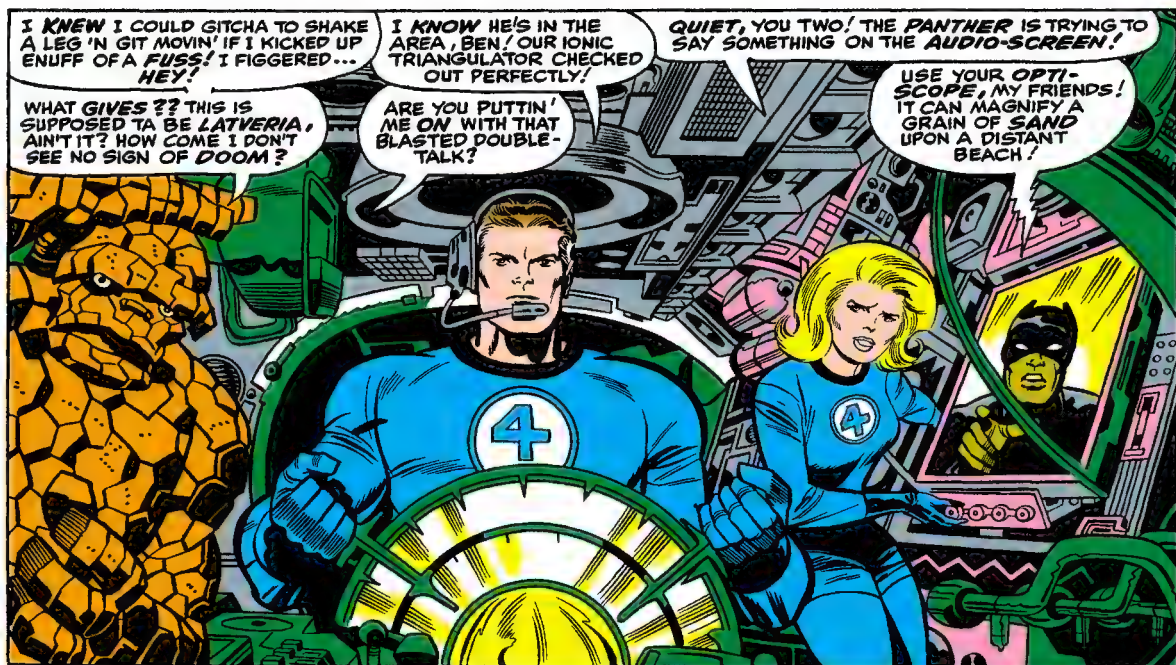
I CAN OUT-DISTANCE YOU WITH THE EASE OF A RANDOM THOUGHT!

DREAM ON, BAD MAN...WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

CAN'T LET HIM ESCAPE! I'VE GOTTA FOLLOW HIM INTO THAT BLACK-CLOUD...NO MATTER WHAT...!







I **KNEW** I COULD GITCHA TO SHAKE A LEG 'N GIT MOVIN' IF I KICKED UP ENUFF OF A **FUSS**! I FIGGERED... **HEY!**

I **KNOW** HE'S IN THE AREA, BEN! OUR IONIC TRIANGULATOR CHECKED OUT PERFECTLY!

QUIET, YOU TWO! THE PANTHER IS TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING ON THE AUDIO-SCREEN!

USE YOUR **OPTI-SCOPE**, MY FRIENDS! IT CAN MAGNIFY A GRAIN OF SAND UPON A DISTANT BEACH!

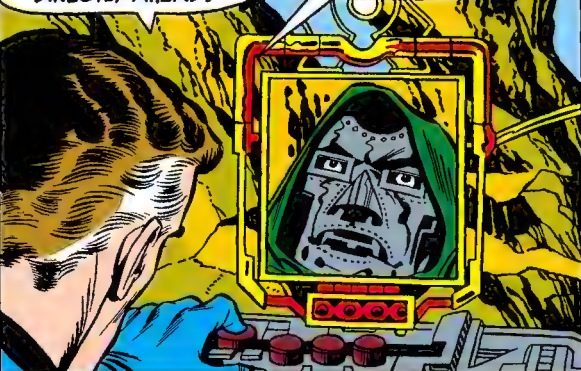
WHAT **GIVES ??** THIS IS SUPPOSED TA BE **LATERIA**, AIN'T IT? HOW COME I DON'T SEE NO SIGN OF **DOOM**?

ARE YOU PUTTIN' ME ON WITH THAT **BLASTED DOUBLE-TALK**?

THEN, AFTER TENSE, SUSPENSEFUL SECONDS OF LONG-DISTANCE SCANNING AT OPTIMUM MAGNIFICATION LEVELS...

THERE HE IS!
ON THAT **MOUNTAIN**... DIRECTLY AHEAD!

BUT, THERE'S NO CHANCE FOR A **SURPRISE ATTACK**... HE **SEES US!**



JOHNNY AIN'T **THERE!** HE MUST'A **DONE SOMETHIN'** TO 'IM!

JUST BRING 'ER IN RIGHT OVER **DOOM**... DO YA HEAR ME?

GIT THIS CRATE **MOVIN'**, RICHARDS! I'M DONE **WAITIN'...**

I'M GONNA **DEMOLISH** 'IM!

FASTER... BLAST IT... FASTER!



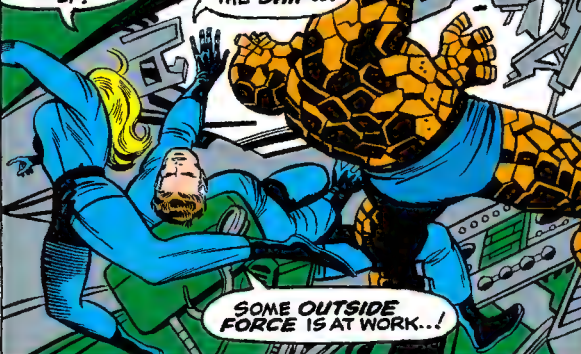
BUT, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED...OR ANOTHER MOVE CAN BE MADE...

WE'RE OUT OF **CONTROL!** THE SHIP IS **SPINNING**... BREAKING UP!

IS THIS ANOTHER ONE'A **YOUR CREEPY TRICKS** TA SLOW ME DOWN, MISTER ??

NO! IT ISN'T ME! IT...IT'S NOT THE **SHIP...**

SOME **OUTSIDE FORCE** IS AT WORK...!

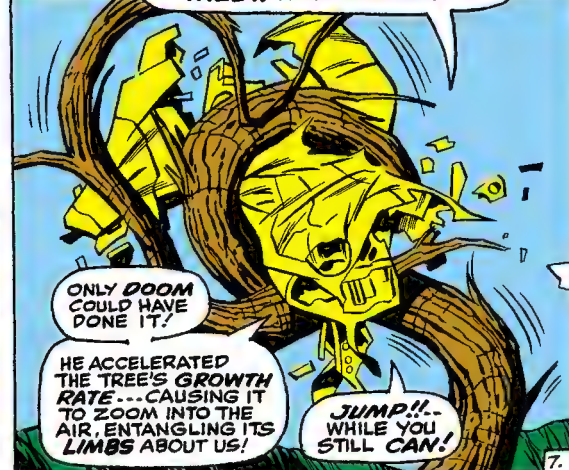


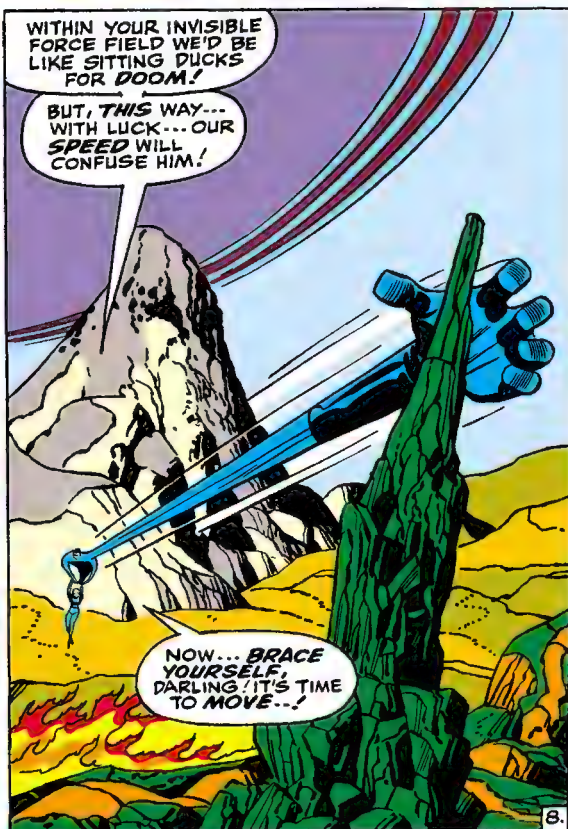
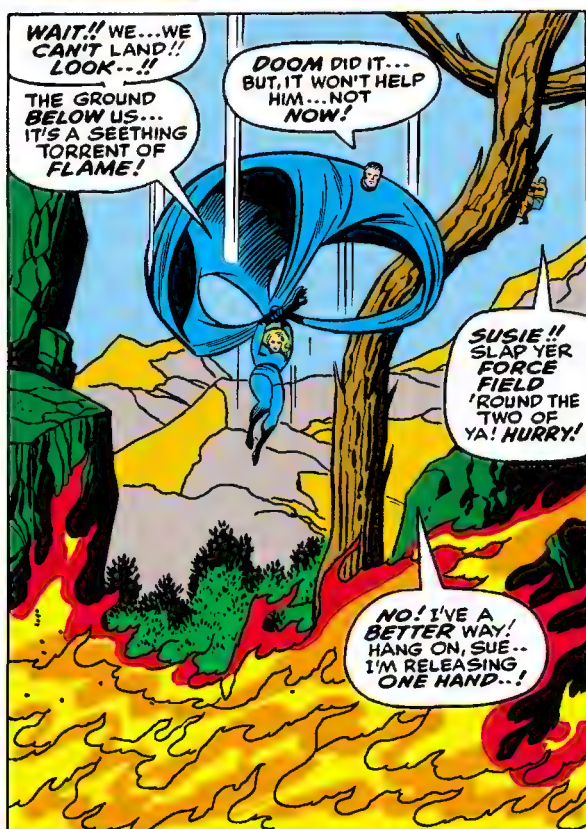
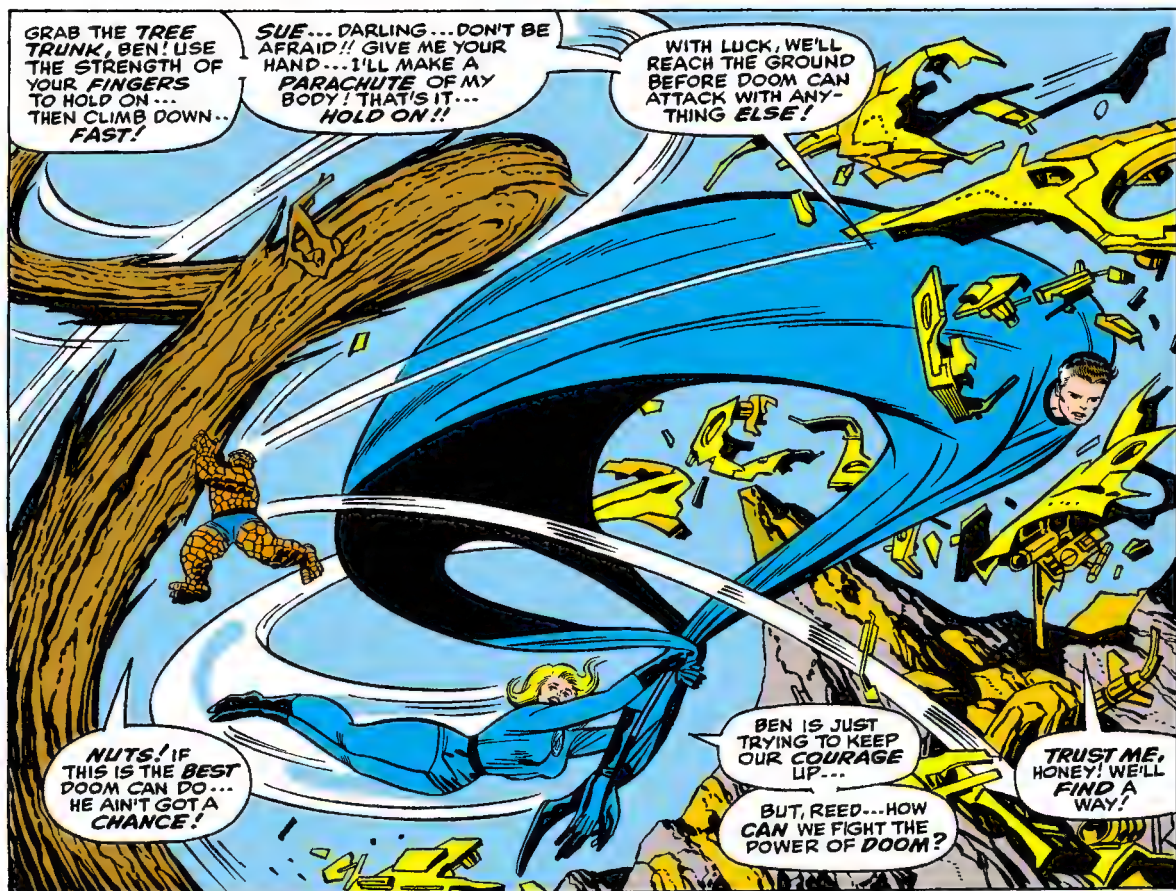
LOOK! IT'S A **TREE**...A GIGANTIC, FAST-GROWING **TREE!!** IT CAUGHT US!

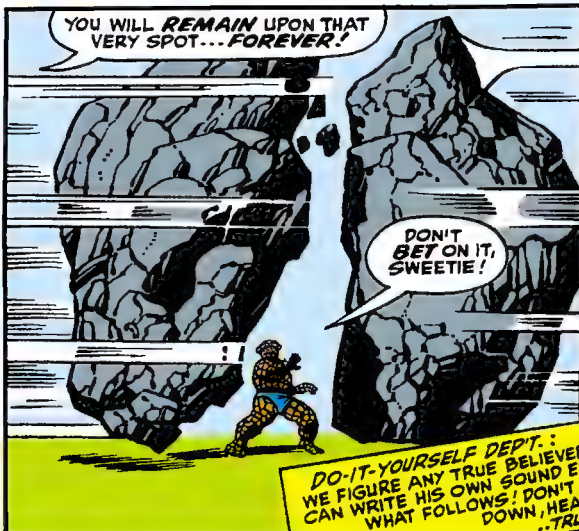
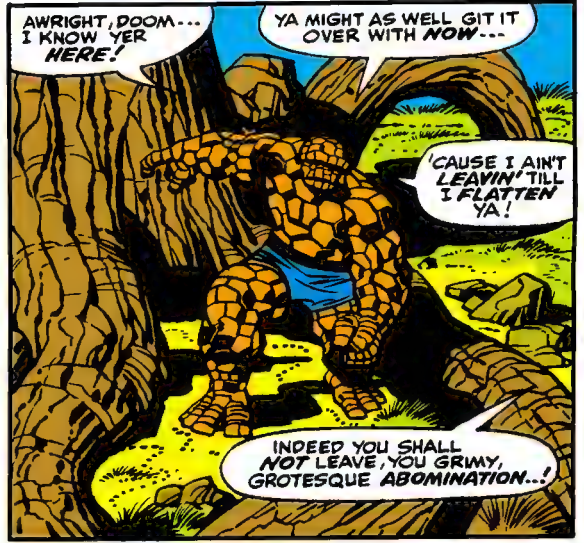
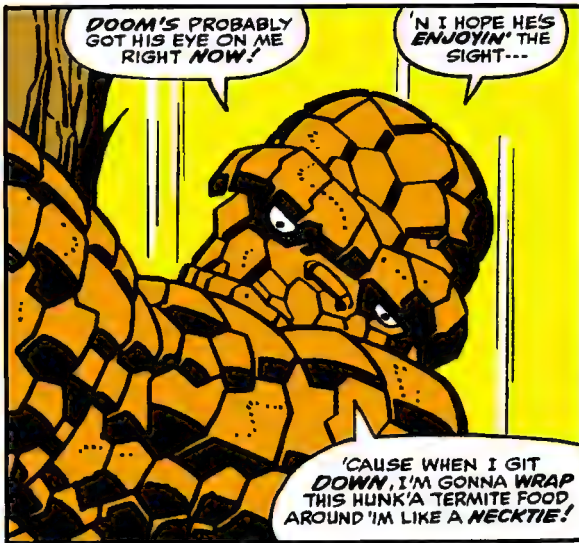
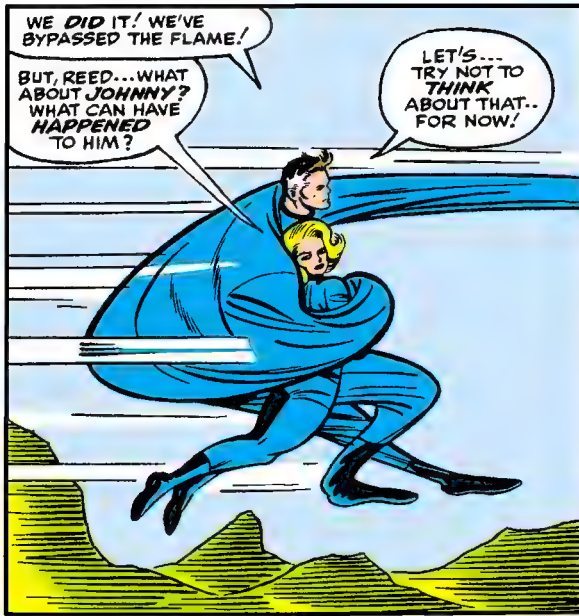
ONLY **DOOM** COULD HAVE DONE IT!

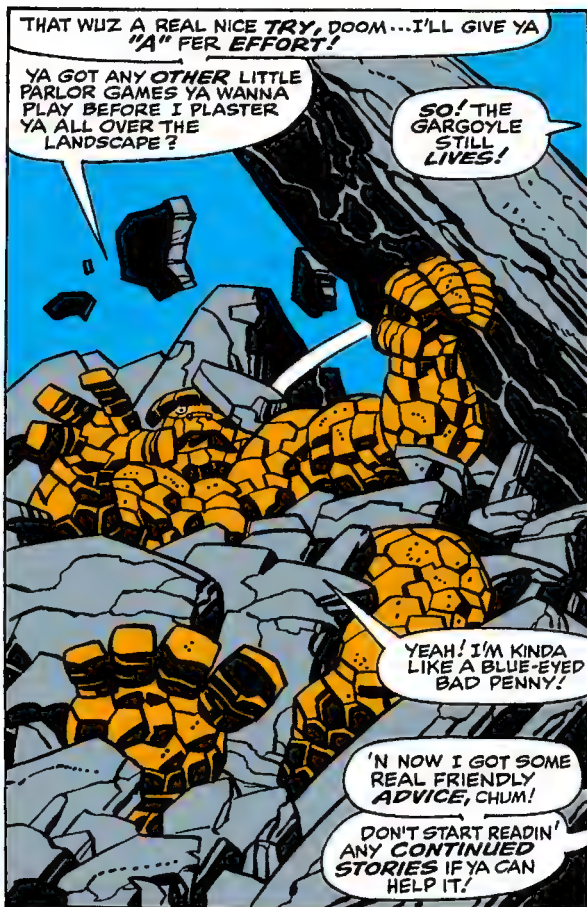
HE **ACCELERATED** THE TREE'S **GROWTH RATE**...CAUSING IT TO **Zoom** INTO THE AIR, ENTANGLING ITS **LIMBS** ABOUT US!

JUMP!! WHILE YOU **STILL CAN!**









THAT WUZ A REAL NICE TRY, DOOM...I'LL GIVE YA "A" FER EFFORT!

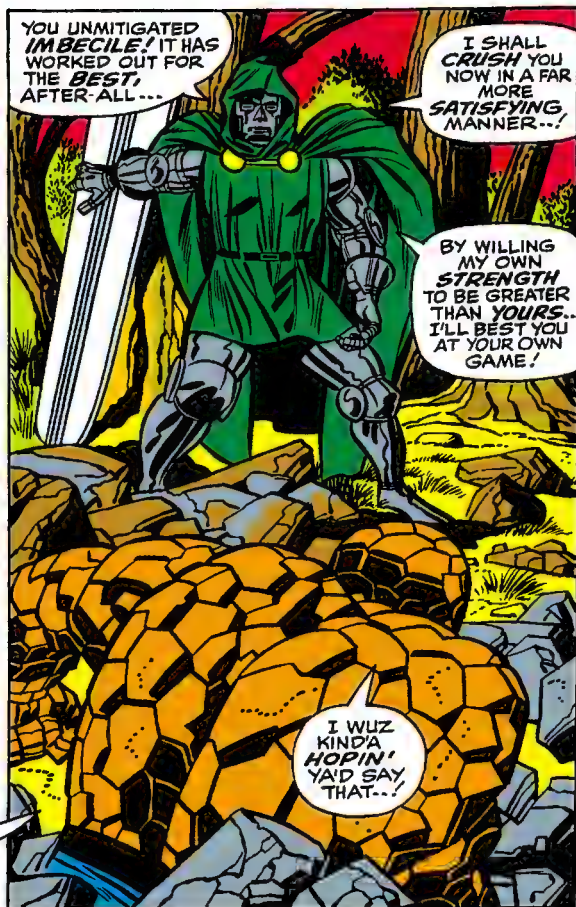
YA GOT ANY OTHER LITTLE PARLOR GAMES YA WANNA PLAY BEFORE I PLASTER YA ALL OVER THE LANDSCAPE?

SO! THE GARGOYLE STILL LIVES!

YEAH! I'M KINDA LIKE A BLUE-EYED BAD PENNY!

'N NOW I GOT SOME REAL FRIENDLY ADVICE, CHUM!

DON'T START READIN' ANY CONTINUED STORIES IF YA CAN HELP IT!

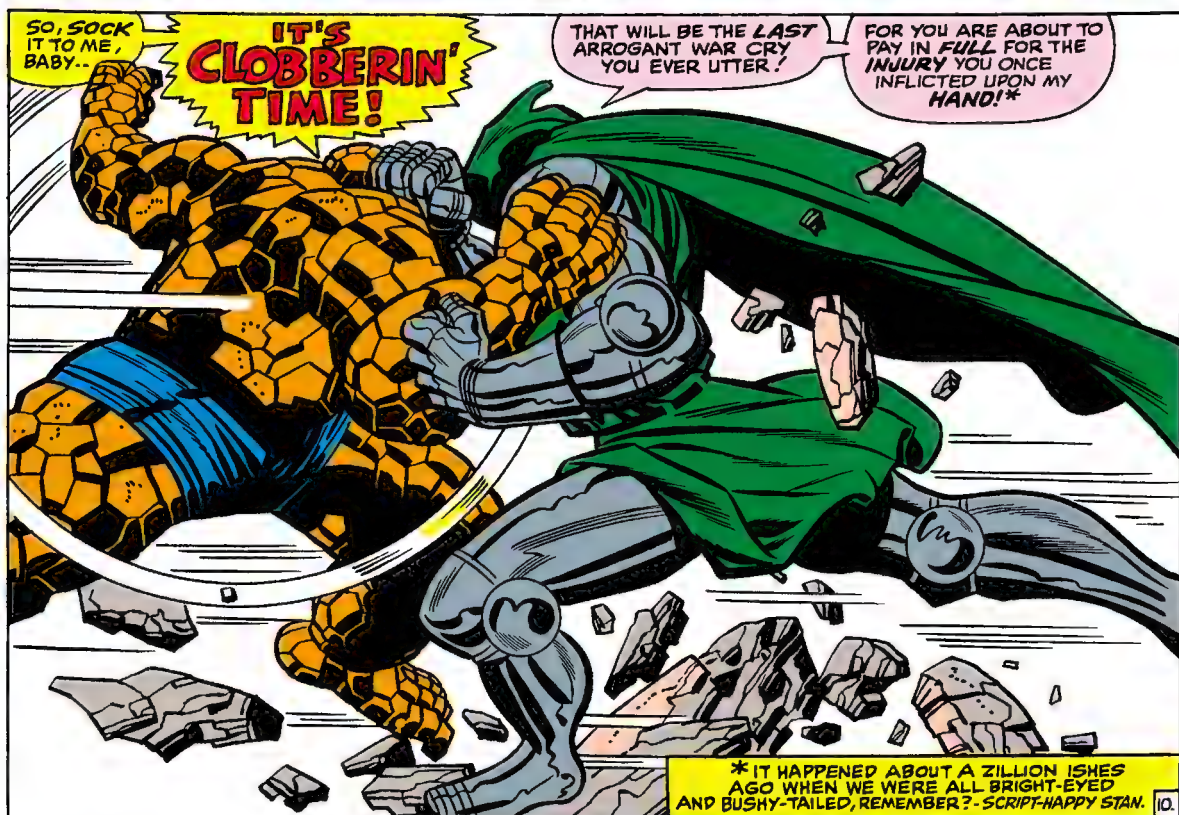


YOU UNMITIGATED IMBECILE! IT HAS WORKED OUT FOR THE BEST, AFTER ALL....

I SHALL CRUSH YOU NOW IN A FAR MORE SATISFYING MANNER...!

BY WILLING MY OWN STRENGTH TO BE GREATER THAN YOURS.. I'LL BEST YOU AT YOUR OWN GAME!

I WUZ KIND'A HOPIN' YA'D SAY THAT...!



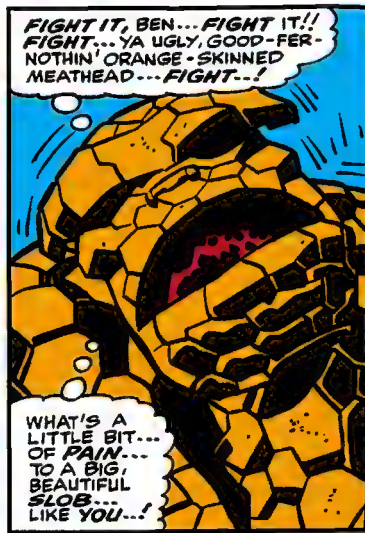
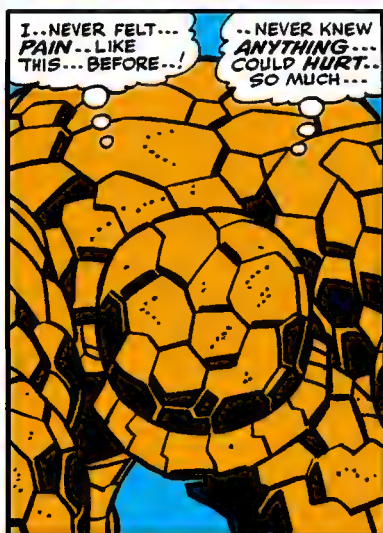
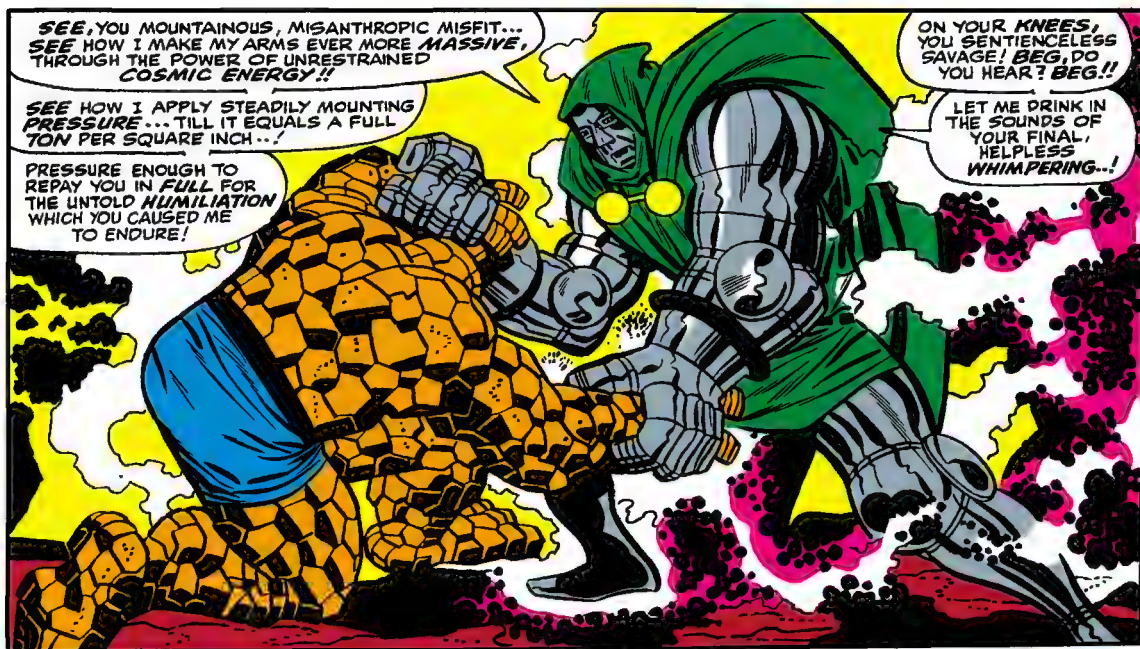
SO, SOCK IT TO ME, BABY...

IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!

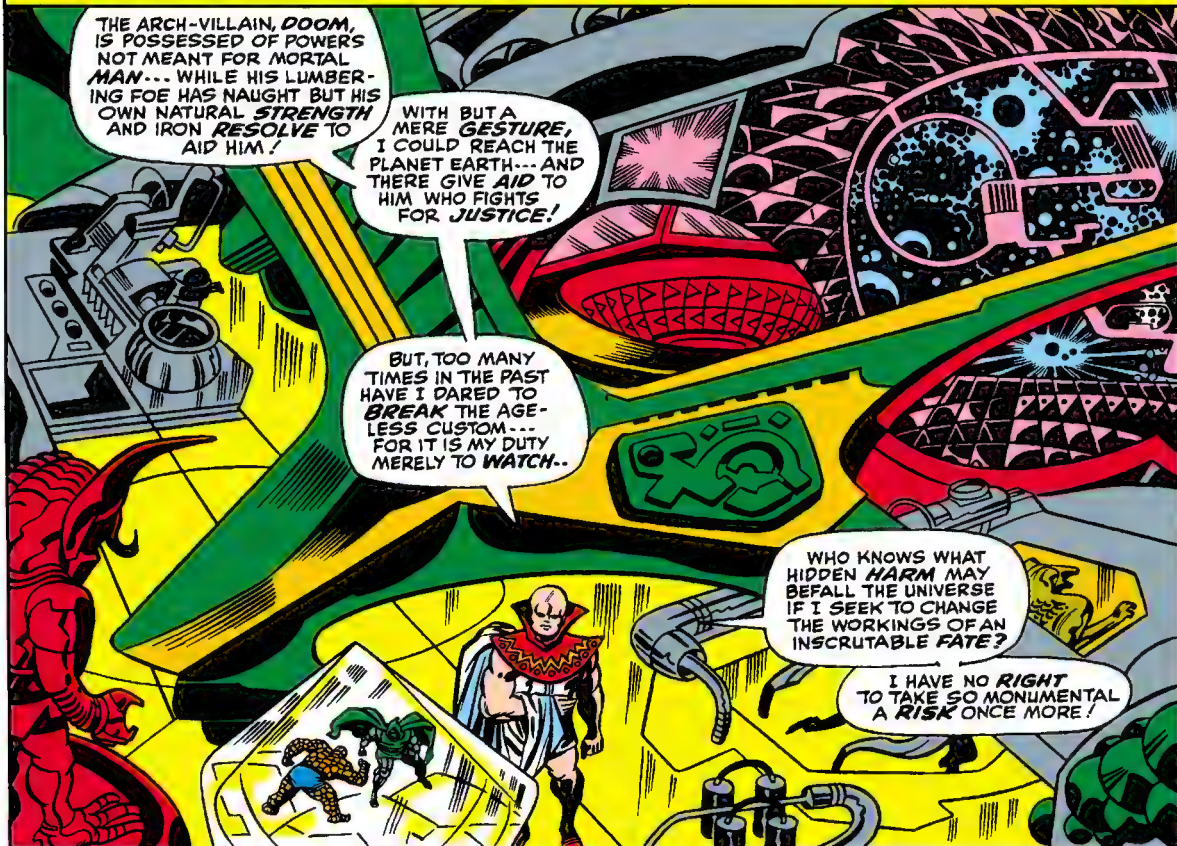
THAT WILL BE THE LAST ARROGANT WAR CRY YOU EVER UTTER!

FOR YOU ARE ABOUT TO PAY IN FULL FOR THE INJURY YOU ONCE INFLICTED UPON MY HAND!*

*IT HAPPENED ABOUT A ZILLION ISHES AGO WHEN WE WERE ALL BRIGHT-EYED AND BUSHY-TAILED, REMEMBER? - SCRIPT-HAPPY STAN.



AT THAT MOMENT, DEEP WITHIN HIS OWN INDESCRIBABLE SANCTUM... HIDDEN BENEATH THE BLUE AREA OF THE SILENT MOON... THE UBIQUITOUS **WATCHER** STARES DEEP INTO HIS EVER-GLOWING **TEMORAL VIEWER**, KNOWING THAT THE FATE OF EARTH MAY WELL DEPEND UPON THE **OUTCOME** OF THE BATTLE HE IS OBSERVING...



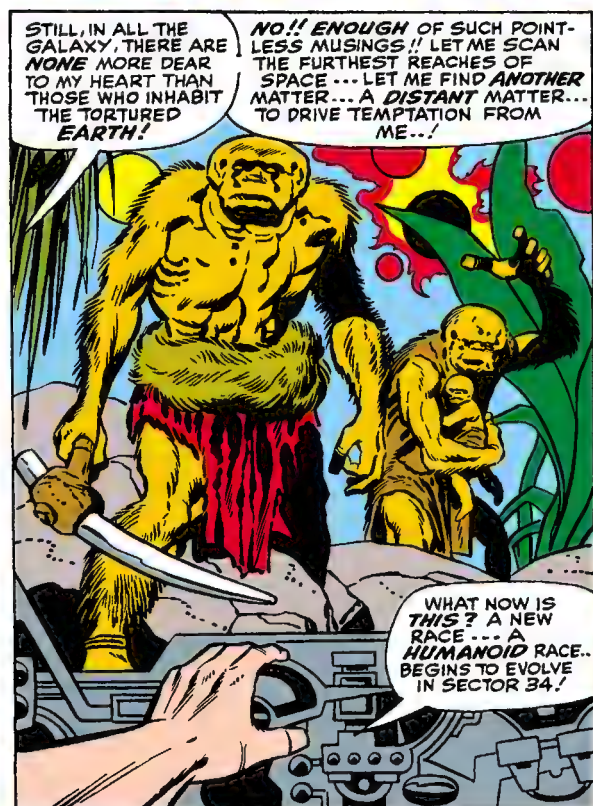
THE ARCH-VILLAIN, **DOOM**, IS POSSESSED OF POWERS NOT MEANT FOR MORTAL MAN... WHILE HIS LUMBERING FOE HAS NAUGHT BUT HIS OWN NATURAL **STRENGTH** AND IRON **RESOLVE** TO AID HIM!

WITH BUT A MERE **GESTURE**, I COULD REACH THE PLANET EARTH... AND THERE GIVE **AID** TO HIM WHO FIGHTS FOR **JUSTICE**!

BUT, TOO MANY TIMES IN THE PAST HAVE I DARED TO **BREAK** THE AGELESS CUSTOM... FOR IT IS MY DUTY MERELY TO **WATCH**...

WHO KNOWS WHAT HIDDEN **HARM** MAY BEFALL THE UNIVERSE IF I SEEK TO CHANGE THE WORKINGS OF AN INSCRUTABLE FATE?

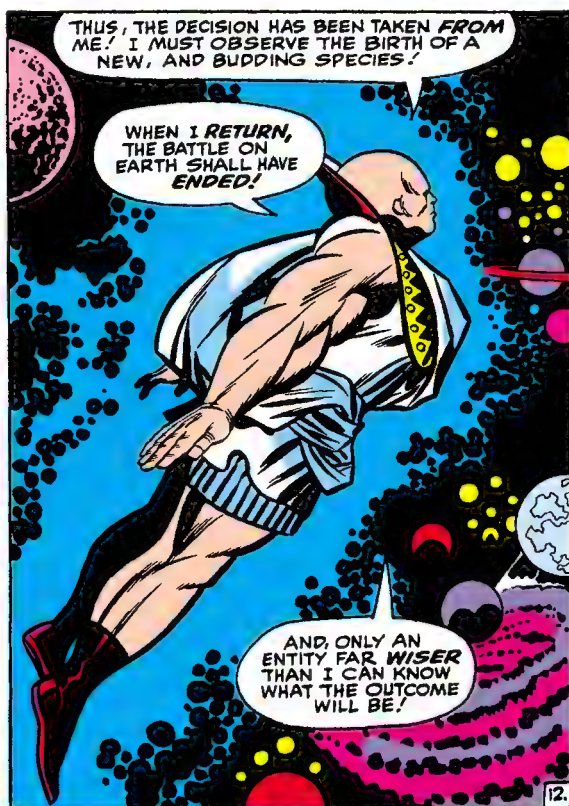
I HAVE NO **RIGHT** TO TAKE SO MONUMENTAL A **RISK** ONCE MORE!



STILL, IN ALL THE GALAXY, THERE ARE **NONE** MORE DEAR TO MY HEART THAN THOSE WHO INHABIT THE TORTURED **EARTH**!

NO!! ENOUGH OF SUCH POINTLESS MUSINGS!! LET ME SCAN THE FURTHEST REACHES OF SPACE... LET ME FIND **ANOTHER** MATTER... A **DISTANT** MATTER... TO DRIVE TEMPTATION FROM ME...!

WHAT NOW IS **THIS**? A NEW RACE... A **HUMANOID** RACE.. BEGINS TO EVOLVE IN SECTOR 34.!



THUS, THE DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN **FROM** ME! I MUST OBSERVE THE BIRTH OF A NEW, AND BUDDING SPECIES!

WHEN I **RETURN**, THE BATTLE ON EARTH SHALL HAVE **ENDED**!

AND, ONLY AN ENTITY FAR **WISER** THAN I CAN KNOW WHAT THE **OUTCOME** WILL BE!



THEN, WHILE THE WONDROUS WATCHER SUITS ACTION TO HIS FATEFUL DECISION...AND HEADS FOR PARTS UNKNOWN...

WE CAN'T DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST DOOM FOREVER, DARLING!

IF ONLY THERE WAS SOME WAY TO FIGHT BACK!

THERE IS A WAY, SUE...!

JUST PRAY THAT ARMY ORDNANCE COMES THROUGH, IN TIME!

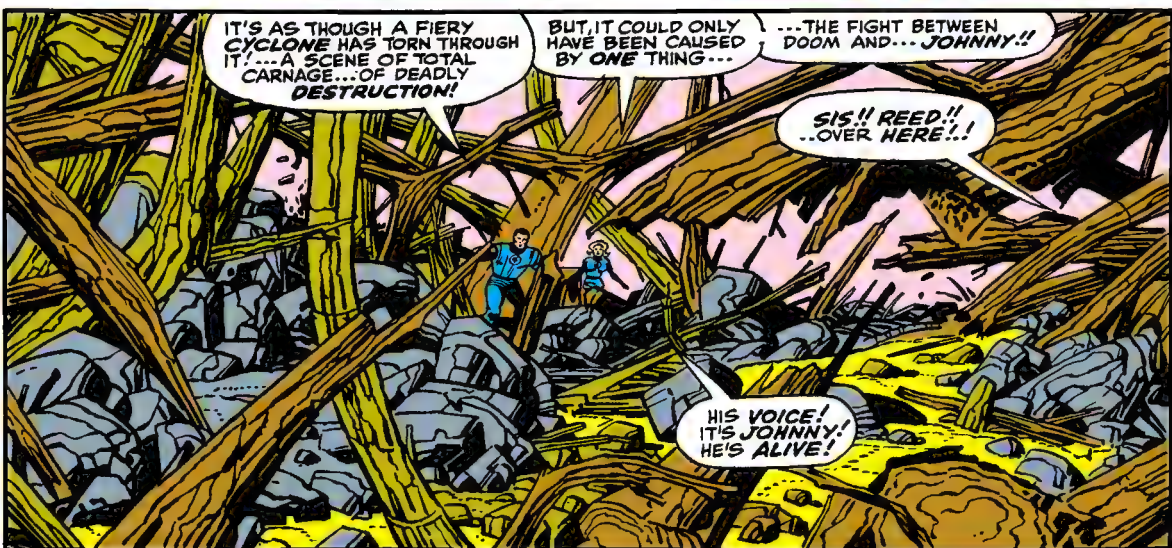


BUT, WHAT CAN ARMY ORDNANCE DO AGAINST THE COSMIC POWER OF DR. DOOM? NO WEAPON IN THE WORLD CAN HURT HIM NOW!

THERE'S ONE THING THAT MIGHT STOP HIM! IT HAS TO...

SUE! WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG, DEAR?

THE ENTIRE FOREST BELOW US... LOOK AT IT! DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS??



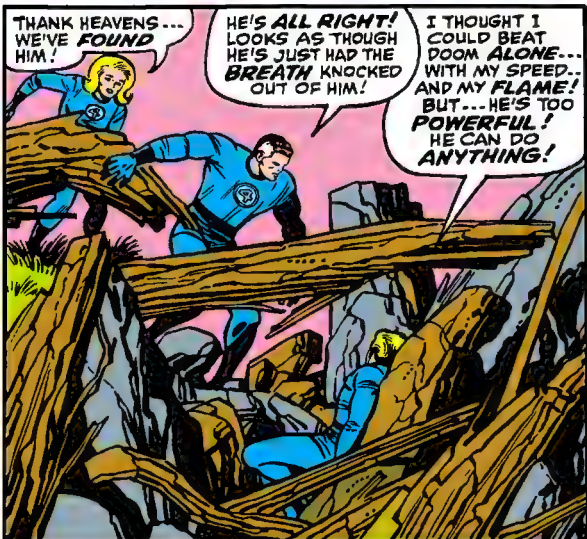
IT'S AS THOUGH A FIERY CYCLONE HAS TORN THROUGH IT!...A SCENE OF TOTAL CARNAGE...OF DEADLY DESTRUCTION!

BUT, IT COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY ONE THING...

...THE FIGHT BETWEEN DOOM AND... JOHNNY!!

SIS!! REED!! ..OVER HERE!!

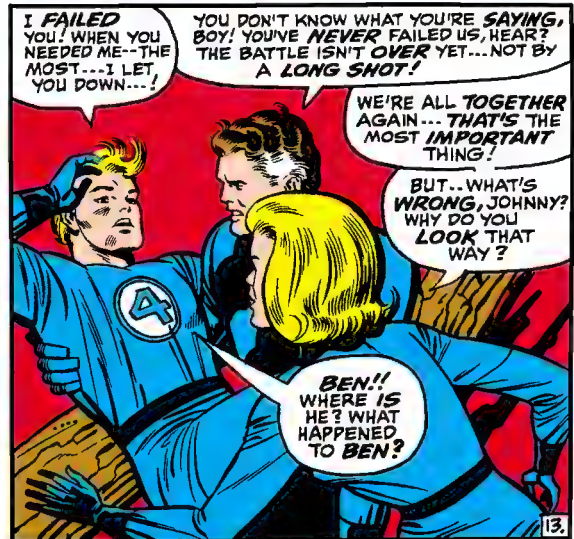
HIS VOICE! IT'S JOHNNY! HE'S ALIVE!



THANK HEAVENS... WE'VE FOUND HIM!

HE'S ALL RIGHT! LOOKS AS THOUGH HE'S JUST HAD THE BREATH KNOCKED OUT OF HIM!

I THOUGHT I COULD BEAT DOOM ALONE... WITH MY SPEED... AND MY FLAME! BUT... HE'S TOO POWERFUL! HE CAN DO ANYTHING!



I FAILED YOU! WHEN YOU NEEDED ME--THE MOST...I LET YOU DOWN...

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BOY! YOU'VE NEVER FAILED US, HEAR? THE BATTLE ISN'T OVER YET...NOT BY A LONG SHOT!

WE'RE ALL TOGETHER AGAIN... THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING!

BUT...WHAT'S WRONG, JOHNNY? WHY DO YOU LOOK THAT WAY?

BEN!! WHERE IS HE? WHAT HAPPENED TO BEN?



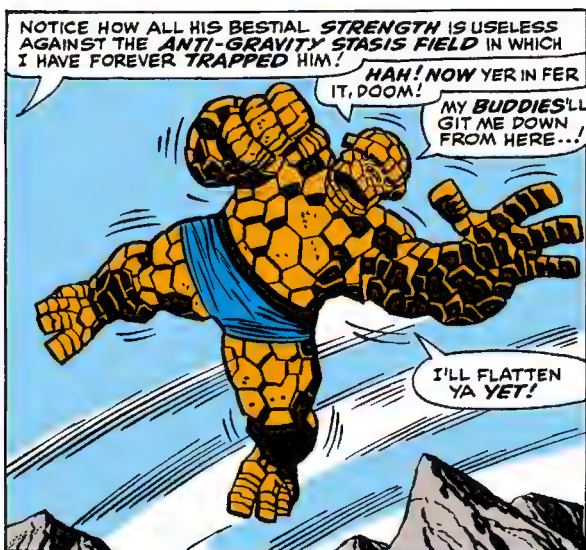
THAT'S *JUST* WHAT WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT, JOHNNY! LET'S... *WAIT!*

THAT *FLASH!* IT'S DOOM'S COSMIC POWER! HE'S USED IT... AGAINST *BEN!*

IF... ANYTHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM...!

OH, NO! WE CAN'T... WE MUSTN'T BE... TOO LATE!

DON'T SAY IT, LAD! DON'T EVEN THINK IT!!



NOTICE HOW ALL HIS BESTIAL *STRENGTH* IS USELESS AGAINST THE *ANTI-GRAVITY STASIS FIELD* IN WHICH I HAVE FOREVER *TRAPPED* HIM!

HAH! NOW YER IN FER IT, DOOM!

MY *BUDDIES*'LL GIT ME DOWN FROM HERE...!

I'LL FLATTEN YA YET!

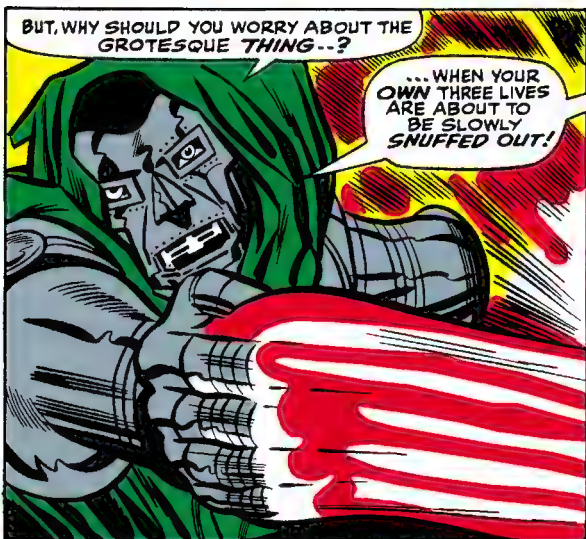


LOOK! UP AHEAD... IT'S *DOOM!*

AH, THE THREE WHO SHALL BE *NEXT* TO FEEL MY AWE-SOME POWER! HOW *KIND* OF YOU TO PLACE YOURSELVES AT MY *DISPOSAL* THIS WAY!

BUT, WHERE'S *BEN*? WHAT'S HE DONE WITH HIM?

AS FOR THE ORANGE-SKINNED *BUFFOON*... I HAVE RENDERED HIM *HELPLESS*... YONDER...!



BUT, WHY SHOULD YOU WORRY ABOUT THE GROTESQUE *THING*...?

... WHEN YOUR OWN THREE LIVES ARE ABOUT TO BE SLOWLY *SNUFFED OUT!*



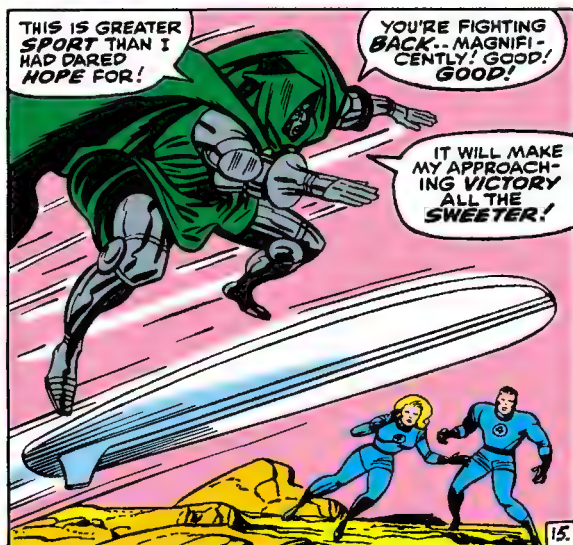
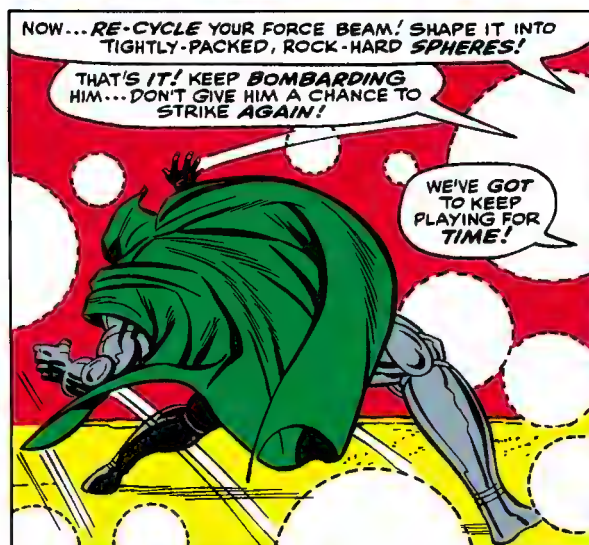
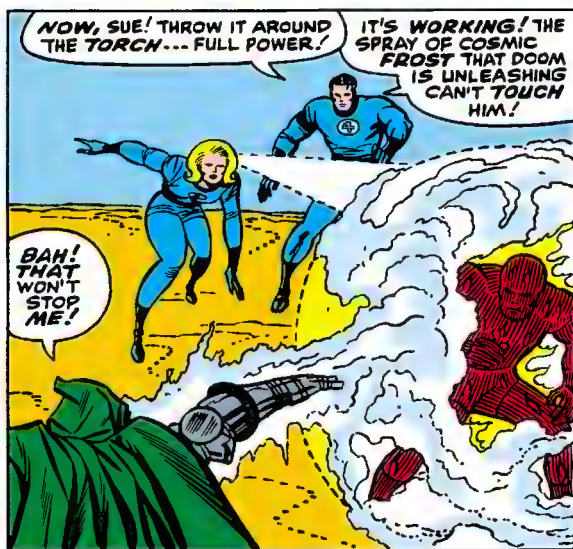
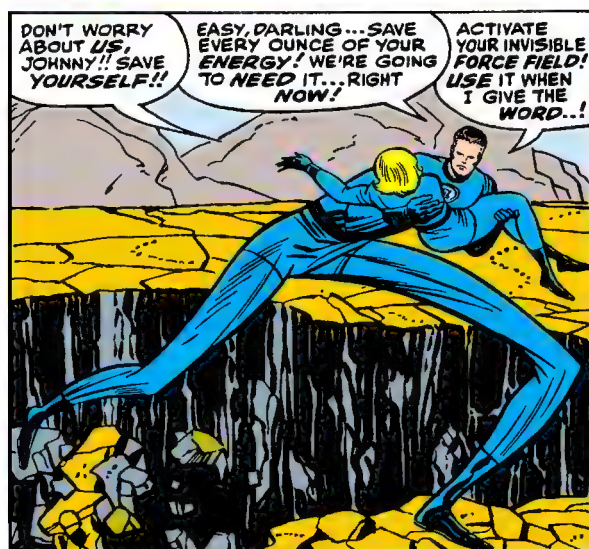
THIS IS FAR TOO GLORIOUS A MOMENT FOR ME TO *END* IT QUICKLY... SO I BEG YOU TO BE *PATIENT!*

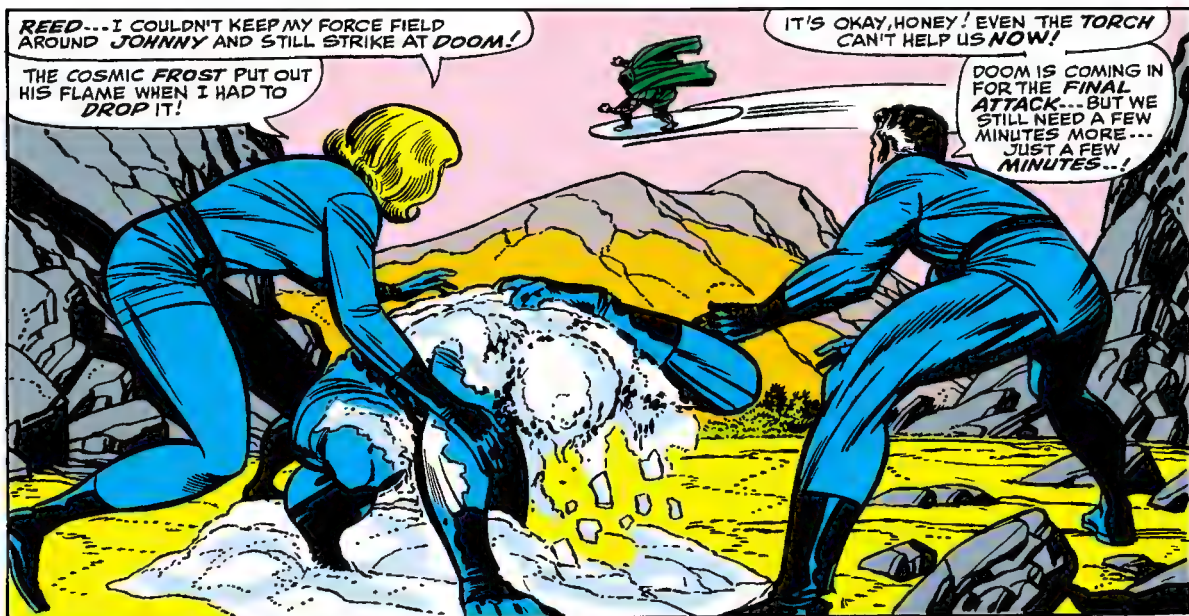
DON'T LOSE YOUR *NERVE!* HE'S JUST *TOYING* WITH US... PLAYING CAT-AND-MOUSE...!

WELL, WE CAN PLAY *GAMES*, TOO!

HE CUT A *BOTTOMLESS PIT* ALL AROUND US... WITH JUST A *GESTURE!*

STAY WITH IT... I'M GONNA *FLAME ON* AGAIN!



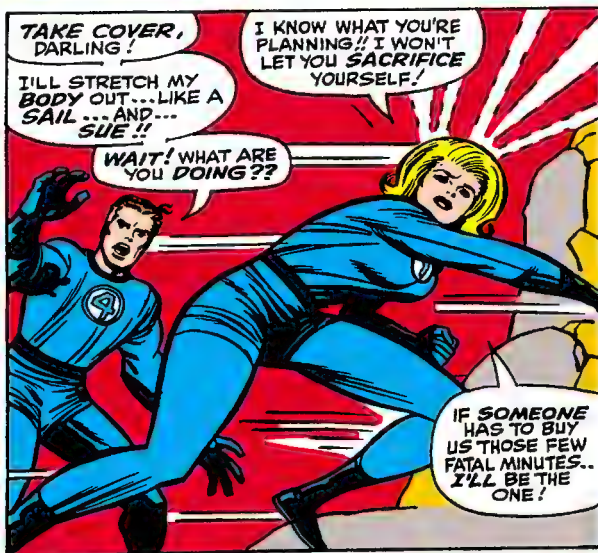


REED... I COULDN'T KEEP MY FORCE FIELD AROUND JOHNNY AND STILL STRIKE AT DOOM!

THE COSMIC FROST PUT OUT HIS FLAME WHEN I HAD TO DROP IT!

IT'S OKAY, HONEY! EVEN THE TORCH CAN'T HELP US NOW!

DOOM IS COMING IN FOR THE FINAL ATTACK... BUT WE STILL NEED A FEW MINUTES MORE... JUST A FEW MINUTES...!



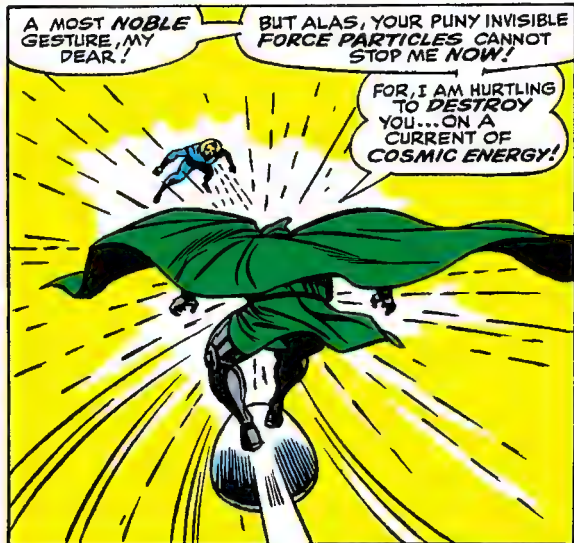
TAKE COVER, DARLING!

I'LL STRETCH MY BODY OUT... LIKE A SAIL... AND... SUE!!

WAIT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING??

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING!! I WON'T LET YOU SACRIFICE YOURSELF!

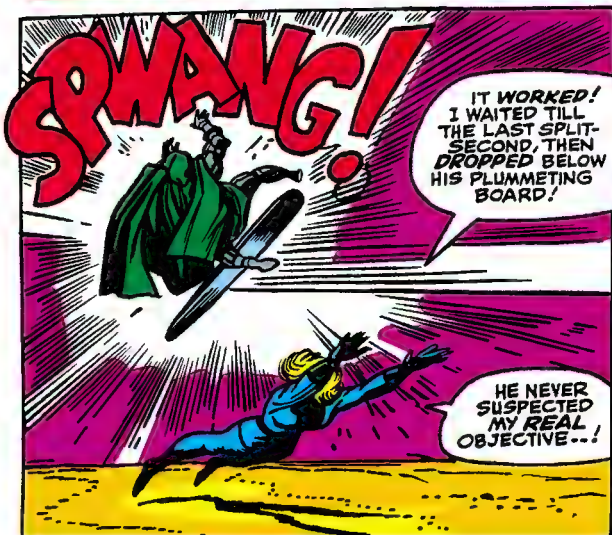
IF SOMEONE HAS TO BUY US THOSE FEW FATAL MINUTES... I'LL BE THE ONE!



A MOST NOBLE GESTURE, MY DEAR!

BUT ALAS, YOUR PUNY INVISIBLE FORCE PARTICLES CANNOT STOP ME NOW!

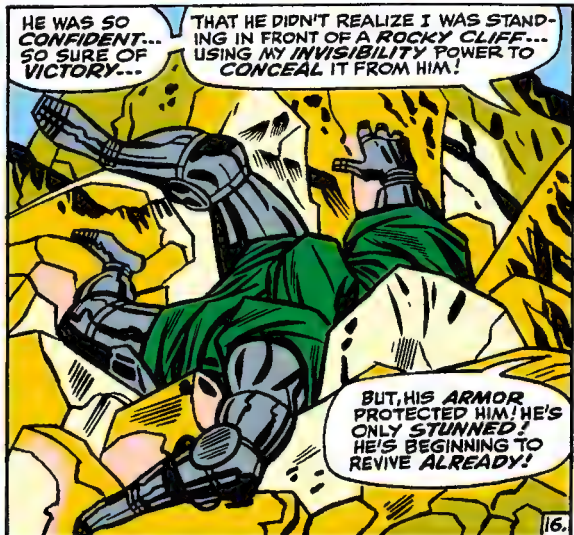
FOR, I AM HURTLING TO DESTROY YOU... ON A CURRENT OF COSMIC ENERGY!



SPWANG!

IT WORKED! I WAITED TILL THE LAST SPLIT-SECOND, THEN DROPPED BELOW HIS PLUMMETING BOARD!

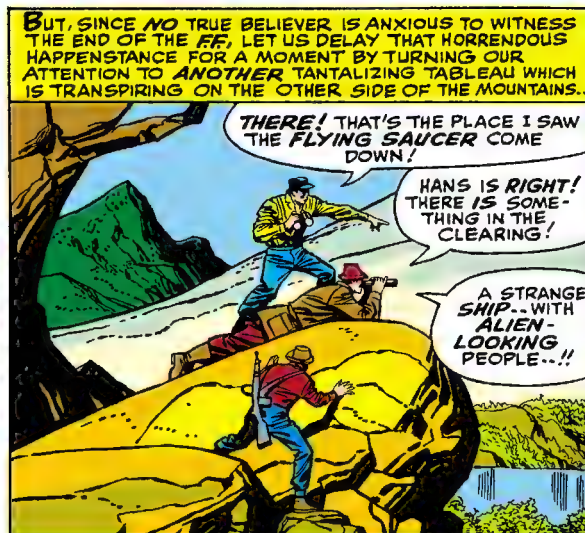
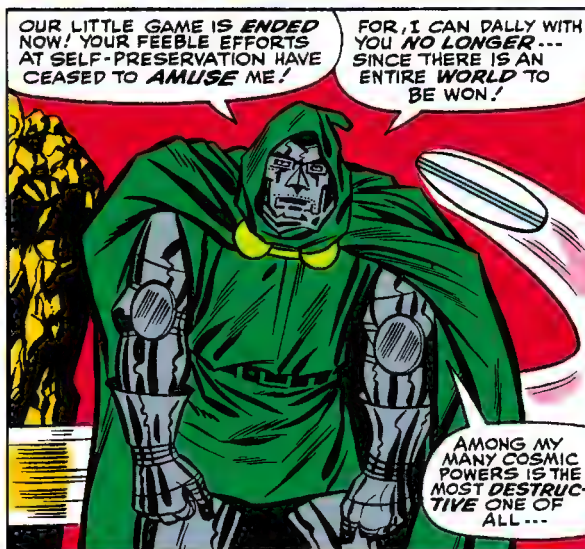
HE NEVER SUSPECTED MY REAL OBJECTIVE...!

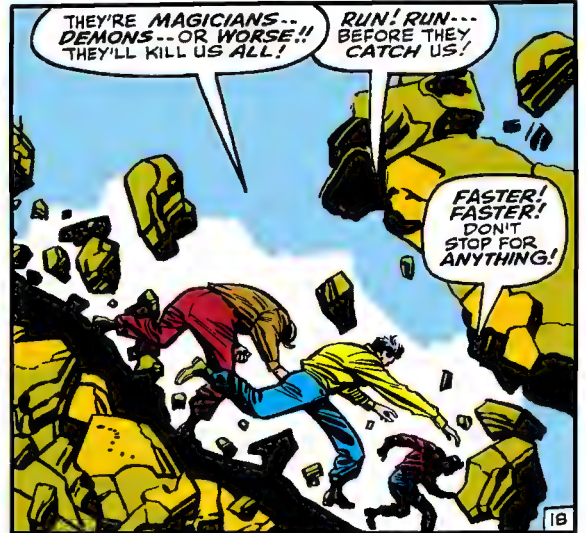
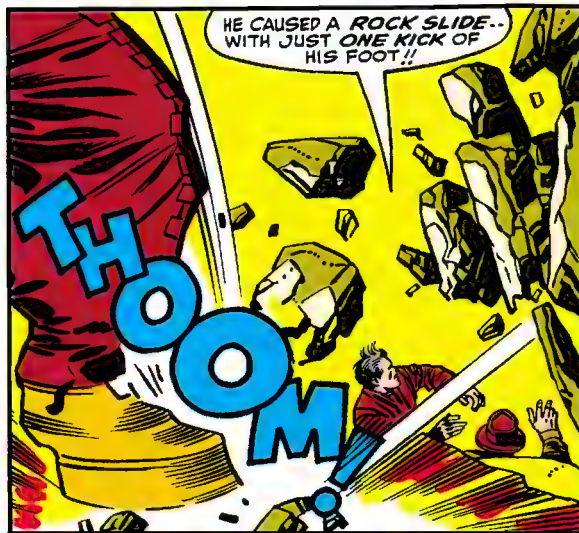
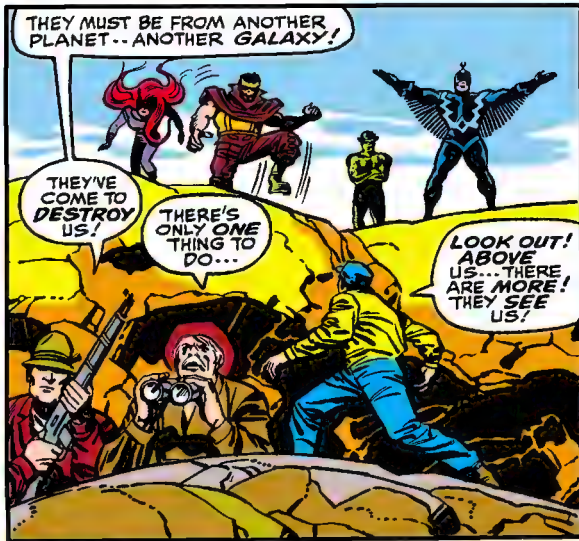
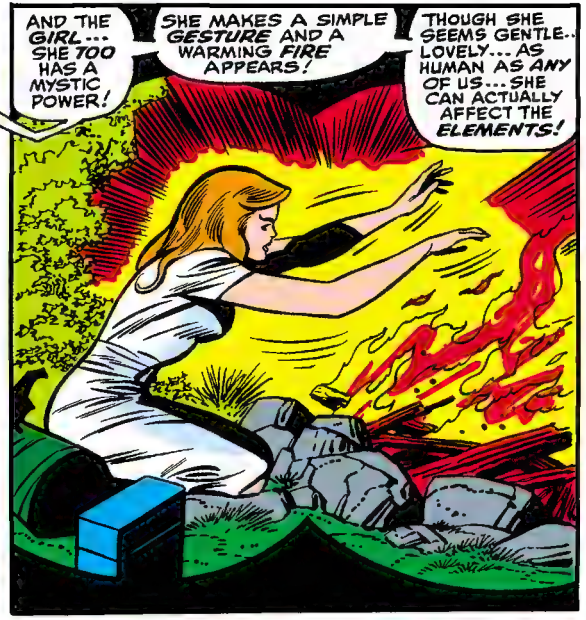


HE WAS SO CONFIDENT... SO SURE OF VICTORY...

THAT HE DIDN'T REALIZE I WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF A ROCKY CLIFF... USING MY INVISIBILITY POWER TO CONCEAL IT FROM HIM!

BUT, HIS ARMOR PROTECTED HIM! HE'S ONLY STUNNED! HE'S BEGINNING TO REVIVE ALREADY!







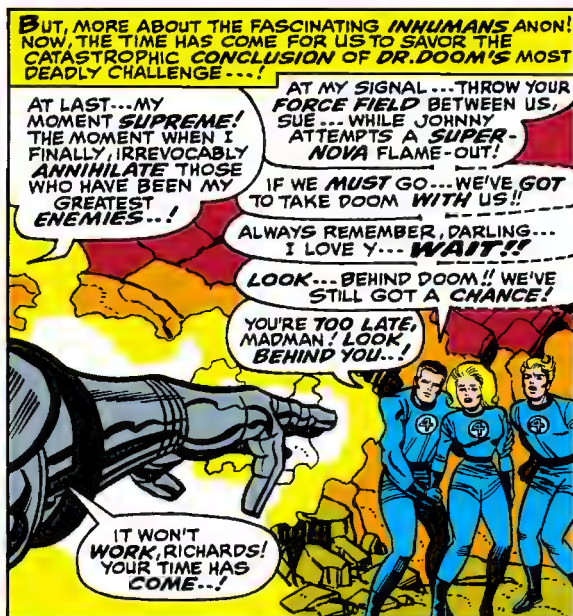
AND, AS THE FEARFUL MOUNTAINEERS FRANTICALLY RACE FROM THE SITE ...

PERHAPS IT WAS UNWISE OF US TO STOP IN A PLACE LIKE THIS!

THE VILLAGERS ARE TOO FEARFUL... TOO SUPERSTITIOUS!

WE HAVE NAUGHT TO FEAR FROM SUCH AS THEY!

SINCE BLACK BOLT FREED US FROM THE NEGATIVE ZONE, NOTHING ON EARTH CAN STAND AGAINST THE POWER OF... WE INHUMANS!



AT LAST...MY MOMENT **SUPREME!** THE MOMENT WHEN I FINALLY, IRREVOCABLY **ANNIHILATE** THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN MY GREATEST ENEMIES...!

AT MY SIGNAL...THROW YOUR **FORCE FIELD** BETWEEN US, SUE... WHILE JOHNNY ATTEMPTS A **SUPER-NOVA FLAME-OUT!**

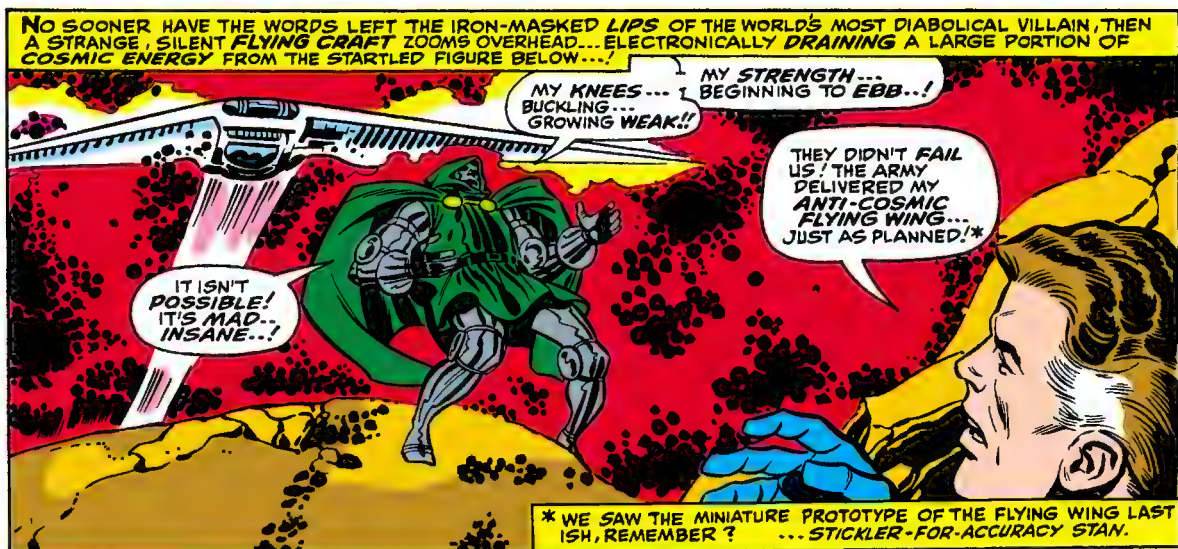
IF WE **MUST** GO...WE'VE GOT TO TAKE DOOM **WITH US!!**

ALWAYS REMEMBER, DARLING... I LOVE Y... **WAIT!!**

LOOK... BEHIND DOOM!! WE'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE!

YOU'RE TOO LATE, MADMAN! **LOOK, BEHIND YOU...!**

IT WON'T WORK, RICHARDS! YOUR TIME HAS COME...!



NO SOONER HAVE THE WORDS LEFT THE IRON-MASKED LIPS OF THE WORLD'S MOST DIABOLICAL VILLAIN, THEN A STRANGE, SILENT **FLYING CRAFT** ZOOMS OVERHEAD...ELECTRONICALLY **DRAINING** A LARGE PORTION OF COSMIC ENERGY FROM THE STARTLED FIGURE BELOW...

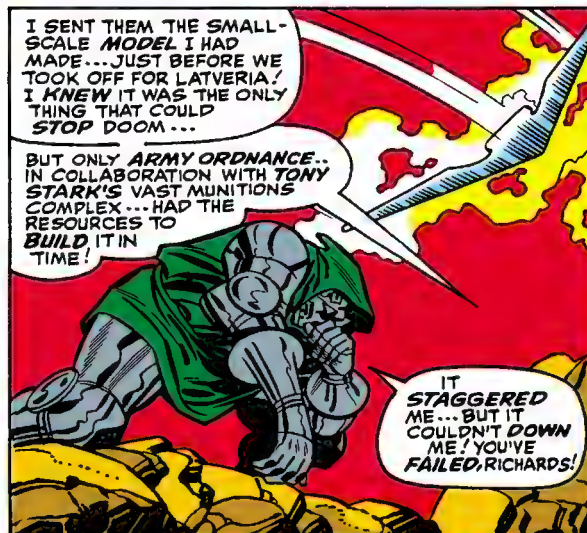
MY KNEES... I BEGINNING TO **EBB...!** BUCKLING... GROWING WEAK!!

MY **STRENGTH...** BEGINNING TO **EBB...!**

THEY DIDN'T FAIL US! THE ARMY DELIVERED MY **ANTI-COSMIC FLYING WING...** JUST AS PLANNED!*

IT ISN'T POSSIBLE! IT'S MAD... INSANE...!

* WE SAW THE MINUTURE PROTOTYPE OF THE FLYING WING LAST ISH, REMEMBER ? ...STICKLER-FOR-ACCURACY STAN.



I SENT THEM THE SMALL-SCALE **MODEL** I HAD MADE...JUST BEFORE WE TOOK OFF FOR LATVERIA! I **KNEW** IT WAS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD STOP DOOM...

BUT ONLY **ARMY ORDNANCE...** IN COLLABORATION WITH **TONY STARK'S** VAST MUNITIONS COMPLEX...HAD THE RESOURCES TO **BUILD** IT IN TIME!

IT **STAGGERED** ME... BUT IT COULDN'T DOWN ME! YOU'VE **FAILED, RICHARDS!**



MY **COSMIC POWER** IS STILL TOO GREAT FOR YOU! EVEN AS I **STAND** HERE, MY **STRENGTH** RETURNS TO ITS MATCHLESS **PEAK!**

NOW, MY VICTORY IS **DOUBLY SWEET...** FOR EVEN THE WEAPON YOU YOURSELF DESIGNED... EVEN YOUR OWN **GENIUS...** COULD NOT **DEFEAT** ME!

NOW, BEFORE THE **END COMES...** WATCH ME...!



I SHALL PROVE MY UTTER CONTEMPT FOR YOU... AND FOR YOUR INNEFFECTUAL SHIP... BY PURSUING IT...

AND THEN... WITH ONE MERE COSMIC BOLT... I'LL REDUCE IT TO TOTAL NOTHINGNESS!



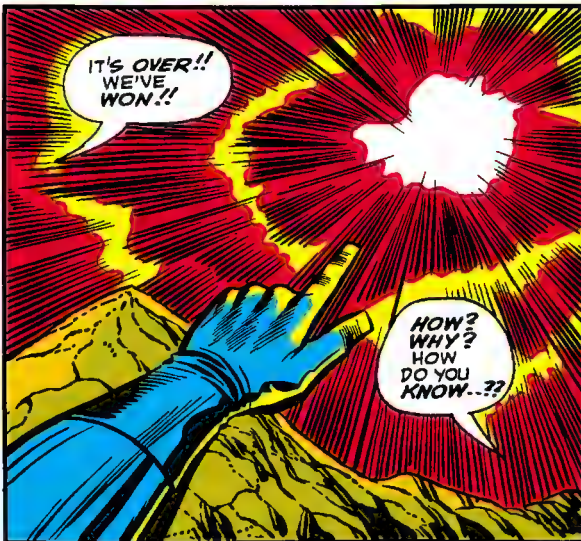
REED! YOUR FLYING WING WASN'T POWERFUL ENOUGH! IT DIDN'T STOP HIM! WHAT CAN WE POSSIBLY DO NOW??

NOTHING, DARLING... JUST WATCH... AND WAIT! EVERYTHING IS STILL GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN!

ARE YOU KIDDING? WHOSE PLAN? SO FAR DOOM'S BEEN CALLIN' ALL THE SIGNALS!

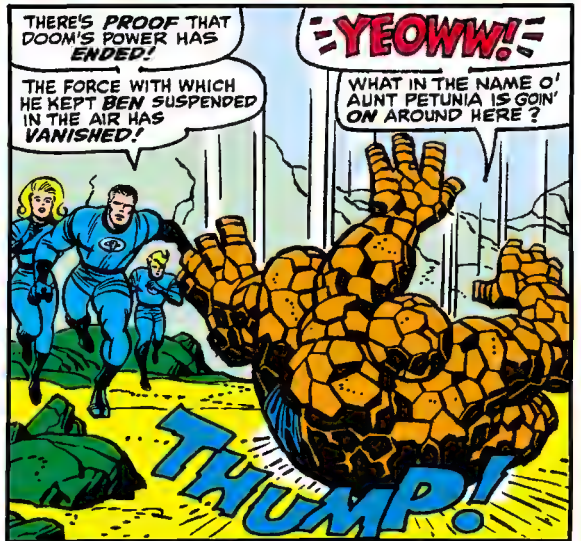
LOOK! IN THE SKY...!!

THE WING WASN'T MEANT TO STOP HIM... IT WAS JUST A DECOY! THE VITAL PART COMES NOW... UP THERE...!



IT'S OVER!! WE'VE WON!!

HOW? WHY? HOW DO YOU KNOW...??



THERE'S PROOF THAT DOOM'S POWER HAS ENDED!

THE FORCE WITH WHICH HE KEPT BEN SUSPENDED IN THE AIR HAS VANISHED!

YEOWW!!

WHAT IN THE NAME O' AUNT PETUNIA IS GOIN' ON AROUND HERE?

THUMP!



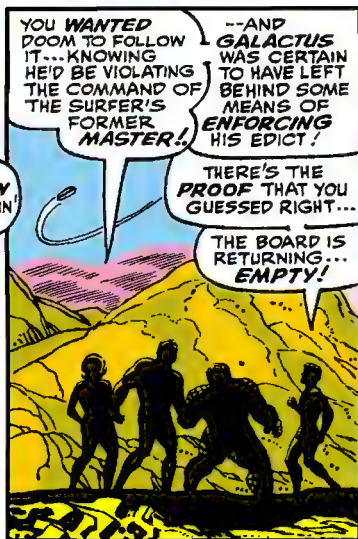
MANKIND IS SAFE AGAIN, BEN... BECAUSE DR. DOOM MADE ONE FATAL MISTAKE...

SEE IF YA CAN SAY IT IN TWENTY-FIVE WORDS OR LESS, HUH?

HE DIDN'T REALIZE THAT THE SILVER SURFER, WHOSE POWER HE STOLE, HAD BEEN CONDEMNED TO REMAIN ON EARTH FOREVER... BY ORDER OF GALACTUS!

SONUVA-GUN!! NOW I'M BEGINNIN' TO GET IT!

YOU PROGRAMMED THE WING TO HEAD FOR OUTER SPACE!



YOU WANTED DOOM TO FOLLOW IT... KNOWING HE'D BE VIOLATING THE COMMAND OF THE SURFER'S FORMER MASTER!

--AND GALACTUS WAS CERTAIN TO HAVE LEFT BEHIND SOME MEANS OF ENFORCING HIS EDICT!

THERE'S THE PROOF THAT YOU GUESSED RIGHT...

THE BOARD IS RETURNING... EMPTY!



IT'S HEADING FOR THE CASTLE... WHERE THE SURFER MUST BE IMPRISONED!

BUT, WHAT ABOUT DOOM? WHAT... BECAME OF HIM...??

PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER... IF WE NEVER KNOW!

NEXT:
A NEW DANGER DAWNS!

The Black Panther's first costume design
by Jack Kirby

HERE IT IS, PEOPLE!
JACK KIRBY'S ORIGINAL
COSTUME FOR THE BLACK
PANTHER! ONLY WOULDJA
BELIEVE THAT BACK IN
THOSE HALCYON DAYS
STAN AND JACK WERE
CALLING HIM THE
COAL TIGER!



YOU'VE NO DOUBT
NOTICED A FEW
SLIGHT CHANGES IN
T'CHALLA'S ATTIRE
AND NAME WHICH
GIVES YOU JUST A
VAGUE IDEA WHAT
KIND OF VISUAL
PREPARATIONS AND
CHARACTER ATTITUDES
ARE CONSIDERED
BEFORE ONE OF OUR
SCINTILLATING HEROES
BURST FULL BLOWN
INTO COMIC BOOK
REALITY.

*Fantastic Four #52 unused cover art
by Jack Kirby & Joe Sinnott*



THE MARVEL MASTERWORKS

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THE GOLDEN AGE

As the Great Depression wore on and the specter of war hung over the heads of all Americans, a new entertaining escape from the newspapers' horrifying realities was born: the comic book. Within their four-color pages, larger-than-life super heroes could make short work of America's foes, giving readers of all ages hope for victory against the real-life enemies that faced the United States.

At the forefront of this new medium was Timely Comics, a young company staffed by such legendary talents as Carl Burgos, Bill Everett, Joe Simon, Jack Kirby and Stan Lee. These skilled writers and artists created a vast array of characters that would give rise to the Marvel Universe!

ATLAS ERA BATTLEFIELD VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA BLACK KNIGHT/YELLOW CLAW VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA HEROES VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA JUNGLE ADVENTURE VOLS. 1-2
ATLAS ERA MENACE VOL. 1
ATLAS ERA STRANGE TALES VOLS. 1-4
ATLAS ERA TALES TO ASTONISH VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA TALES OF SUSPENSE VOLS. 1-3
ATLAS ERA VENUS VOL. 1

THE MARVEL AGE

It was August 1961 and change was hitting the newsstands. *Fantastic Four* #1 did not feature the squeaky-clean heroes of yesteryear. These were real characters placed in extraordinary circumstances. They lived together, they fought among themselves—and sometimes, they even lost to the bad guys. This was more than a change in attitude: It was the beginning of something entirely different—the Marvel Age of Comics!

Thanks to the fertile imaginations of Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko and others, an unending list of heroes followed the FF with ever-increasing acclaim and popularity: the Amazing Spider-Man, the Mighty Thor, the Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, Iron Man and the X-Men, to name but a few. These were the Marvel heroes, born of conflict and a continuous struggle to balance human lives with superhuman responsibilities.

The *Marvel Masterworks* series was created to give comic-book readers everywhere the chance to experience the greatest comics the world has known as they were originally presented.

GOLDEN AGE ALL-WINNERS VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE CAPTAIN AMERICA VOLS. 1-5
GOLDEN AGE DARING MYSTERY VOLS. 1-2
GOLDEN AGE HUMAN TORCH VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE MARVEL COMICS VOLS. 1-5
GOLDEN AGE MYSTIC COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE SUB-MARINER VOLS. 1-3
GOLDEN AGE U.S.A. COMICS VOL. 1
GOLDEN AGE YOUNG ALLIES VOL. 1

THE ATLAS ERA

Seeing super heroes waning, Timely Comics evolved into Atlas Comics and took on a vast new range of genres: science-fiction tales of outer space adventures and unimaginable monsters; realistic war comics; buxom jungle heroines; horror comics that would become the center of a moral panic that rocked the industry; and romance comics for the emerging teen audience. Even the classic costumed heroes of the '40s retooled to take on the threat of Communism. From Western gunfighters to crime to horror, Atlas had it all!



THE MARVEL MASTERWORKS PROUDLY PRESENT THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS COMICS AND SUPER HEROES FROM THEIR VERY BEGINNINGS IN A SERIES OF PAINSTAKINGLY RESTORED ARCHIVAL VOLUMES.



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